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GILBERT ST. MAURICE.

BY

MRS. L. D. WHITSON.

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

Within the chambers of our mind there has for years lain a half-defined purpose of some day committing to print some of the leading incidents of the late war which came under our own personal observation, which only had a passing newspaper notice, read for a time, perhaps, and then thrown away and forgotten. Murfreesboro, which was the theater of many thrilling incidents, changed hands several times during the war. Her fidelity to the South, her almost spotless escutcheon, stand within the memory of all unrivaled; her citizens were true to the cause with but few exceptions. So were her soldiers, whose names shine out like brilliant stars amid the dusk of defeat. And why should not a living, breathing, burning pen trace in letters of fire, how these—

“Hearts of oak
Went 'mid roar and smoke
On to victory?”

The stately heroism, the Spartan-like firmness, the stubborn courage that endured to the bitter end, of Tom Fowler, Hardy Murfee, James Oslin, Charley Felts, Ed. Arnold, and hundreds of others who, although their names are not mentioned here, are none the less worthy, commands respect wherever they go. Why not twine a wreath of immortelles around the gallant heads of Generals J. B. Palmer, John C. Brown, Frank Cheatham, and many, many others in whose courage there was something almost sublime? We want to do honor to the old Southern soldier everywhere who endured to the end. It was an army of war-worn, battered heroes, who had trod with bare, bleeding feet the frozen hills of East Tennessee—on the long, hard, forced marches everywhere—that came back to us in the spring-time of 1865, with “all lost save honor.” Far above the din and smoke and heat of bat-

tle the voices of these men were heard as they cheered their soldiers on to victory, and drove impetuously everything before them.

There are those of our friends who have said to us: "Why not 'let the dead past bury its dead?'" We cannot—we have no wish to—forget; and if there be any sin in hating, let it lie at our own door. Is it any wonder we cannot clasp hands in fraternal greeting over the rivers of blood that have rolled between us—when the mutilated forms of our murdered heroes rise before us—when we remember the blazing towns and villages that marked the pathway of the Yankee army throughout the South; the negro soldier arrayed in the national uniform of blue, and marching under the "stars and stripes," and prompted and incited to, and protected in, every deed of diabolism that the mind of man could invent?

In our book we have only written of events and incidents as they occurred, and have adhered strictly to the truth in the statement of facts. Gilbert St. Maurice is no fictitious character, painted for the amusement of an idle hour, but he lived his life, and died just as described.

The defeat of the South will always be to some of us a sore point; and if what we have written here offend anyone, let them help themselves as best they may; and we will console ourselves with the quotation:

"There's many a shaft at random sent,
Which finds the mark the archer never meant;"

And wherever it does find its mark, we do not care. So, with no apologies to anyone for what we have written, we send it forth to its fate, be it "good, bad or indifferent," remembering that had it not been for the desertion of the soldiers, and the faithlessness of the citizens, the Southern flag would be floating in triumph to-day!

TO THE
OLD ARMY OF THE SOUTH,

Who, for four long years, bore the blood-red battle
flag aloft in so many brilliant encounters,
this volume is respectfully inscribed
by the Authoress.

MURFREESBORO, TENN., May 1, 1874.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
CHAPTER I.—Old Memories	I
CHAPTER II.—The St. Maurice Family	5
CHAPTER III.—The Party	12
CHAPTER IV.—Major Hart is opposed to his daughter marrying a Secessionist: also opposes his son in joining the Confederate army	18
CHAPTER V.—Gilbert St. Maurice visits his betrothed in her own home	33
CHAPTER VI.—St. Maurice goes to Virginia	41
CHAPTER VII.—Victor visits his mother, and receives her blessing	55
CHAPTER VIII.—Extract from a letter from Virginia .	63
CHAPTER IX.—St. Maurice is taken prisoner	70
CHAPTER X.—Victor and St. Maurice transferred to Middle Tennessee	75
CHAPTER XI.—Bravery of Col. Lawton and his gallant Georgians	84
CHAPTER XII.—Private citizens held as hostages . . .	89
CHAPTER XIII.—The entrance of Nelson's Division into Murfreesboro	100
CHAPTER XIV.—The merry fall of 1862	106
CHAPTER XV.—The battle of Stone's River	116
CHAPTER XVI.—Important desertion of a telegraph operator	126
CHAPTER XVII.—Home life of Marion Hart.	137
CHAPTER XVIII.—Death of St. Maurice	145

	PAGE.
CHAPTER XIX.—Colonel St. Maurice and his wife . . .	157
CHAPTER XX.—Major Hart repents of his Unionism .	165
CHAPTER XXI.—Captain Buckingham	175
CHAPTER XXII.—Citizens on the forts	187
CHAPTER XXIII.—Southern housekeeping before the war	198
CHAPTER XXIV.—Yankee troops camping on Major Hart's plantation	209
CHAPTER XXV.—A Yankee citizen comes south for the body of his brother	223
CHAPTER XXVI.—Curious death bed scene	229
CHAPTER XXVII.—Conclusion	239
—————	
BRENDA MERTON	247

GILBERT ST. MAURICE.

CHAPTER I.

A BATTLE. OLD MEMORIES.

The wind goes sobbing down the glen,
The dismal, dripping rain and sleet
We hear with many a wailing moan,
Go pattering on their misty feet,
And sweeping last year's withered leaves
Far up the long deserted street.

I shiver with a vague unrest,
I sicken with a nameless dread,
For, oh! this dismal rain and sleet
Is beating on thy darling head,
And this wild, sobbing winter wind
Is moaning o'er thy lowly bed.

I see again the fervid noon,
The fierce rays of the July sun,
The tramping of ten thousand men,
The thundering crash of many a gun,
The fierce charge up the reeking hill!
And then—my life with thine is done.

P. H. C.

THE last act in the great Drama of Life
had been played.

A battle had been lost and won: two
homes had been made desolate, and a

cloud passed over the noon-day sun, as the fatal bullet, which sped on its work of destruction but too well, forever stilled the brave young heart of Lieutenant Gilbert St. Maurice.

Dead, in the matchless bloom of manhood! the last son of an ancient and honorable family. Forever closed the eagle eyes that had never failed in the fiercest heat of battle, while the victor's smile still wreathed the full, red lips!

Dead, in his grand, heroic beauty! with his fair, proud, aristocratic face upturned to the sun, 'neath the heat and glare of a burning Georgia sky, on that hot afternoon in July!

The silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl was broken, and the spirit had returned unto the God who gave it.

Dead—he was immortal!

Night at last closed over the battle-field, and the weary soldiers rested on their arms. All the day long, from early morn till the shadows of evening lengthened

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386
101

over the bloody field, there had been heard the never-ceasing roll of the cannon and the bursting of shells, and the screams of the wounded and dying filled the atmosphere, where grim-visaged war held high revel in that Carnival of Death.

Ah, Heaven! it was a sad sight.

Well might a nation weep tears of blood, and bemoan in sackcloth and ashes the ghastly scene that everywhere met the eyes. The moon cast an uncertain and flickering light over the dew wet, pallid faces of the dead—noble sacrifices for their country's weal and their country's honor.

Old soldiers of the Army of the South! Heroes of a Lost Cause! In your nameless graves to-night, scattered from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, white with the snows of 1874, with your pale cold hands folded over your pulseless hearts, we honor you *now*, as we honored you then! The sound of the bugle brings back to us all the old enthusiasm of long ago.

Gallant officers and soldiers! Superb in your *tout ensemble*, with scarlet and buff facings, gold braid, long gauntlets, fancy top boots, and the bold, self-confident step of the Confederate soldier of the days long dead—alas! now a dream of the past. How we love to think of you even now, although so many summers have come and gone since you have done with “life’s fitful fever.”

What shall we say to those who helped to bring darkness and death and defeat on the once proud and happy Land of the South? To those who rushed frantically forward, as the first long line of Federal bayonets gleamed like silver in the sunlight, and *voluntarily* took the oath of allegiance to the United States Government, with the avowed intention to “save their property?” May the shadow of an avenging Nemesis pursue them relentlessly unto death!

CHAPTER II.

THE ST. MAURICE FAMILY.

THE early May sunlight lingered pleasantly amid the flowers and shrubbery that surrounded the stately old homestead of the St. Maurices. And very fair and beautiful it looked in the spring-time of that goodly year, 1861. The odors of the flowers, the sweet songs of the birds that flitted hither and thither through the trees, the golden patches of sunshine, and the deep, cool shadows, made it seem an earthly paradise.

But where has there ever existed a paradise that the serpent has entered not? His shining folds lie hidden from sight under the petals of the roses. Where has there ever existed a home that some skeleton has not grinned horribly, and shook his long, bony finger menacingly from the cupboard?

The St. Maurices were one of the oldest

and most aristocratic families of South Carolina. It was their proud boast that the blood which flowed in their veins had never mingled with any save of a stain as rich and as old as their own. And it sorely hurt them for one of the "coarser clay" to come in contact with their "ermined pride."

The old homestead, which, by right of inheritance, had descended for generations back to the eldest son, stood a fair and venerable pile, amidst its wealth of flowers and statuary and fountains, and all that artistic taste could invent to render a home attractive and lovely. Within the length and breadth of South Carolina there was no more urbane and polished gentleman, with courtly manners, than Col. St. Maurice. He and his yet handsome wife entertained with princely hospitality, and in the neighborhood in which they lived it was considered quite a feather in one's cap, socially, to have received one of those square, thick, satiny, cream-colored envelopes, containing an invitation to assemble at their house, on any stated occasion; for

in their home you would be sure to meet the most distinguished people in the State. Unbounded wealth had always been theirs, added to a refined, cultivated taste. As far as the eye could reach, the wide expanse of rice fields was covered with dusky forms, that came and went at their bidding. The lands of the St. Maurices had never changed hands. And now, while we write, preparations were going on in the house for a grand festival. The pride of the house, the light of the father's and mother's eye, the only heir to that princely estate, had only a few days since arrived at home after a prolonged absence in the Old World—Gilbert St. Maurice.

He was all that his proud parents could desire; well educated, polished and refined even to fastidiousness; the heart had been cultivated as well as the mind; and in all his travels and sight-seeings on the other continent, amid the ten thousand temptations which beset a gay and handsome young man, of aristocratic birth and fortune, with nothing to do but to enjoy himself, Gilbert St. Maurice had never

yielded to temptation, but preserved untarnished the ancient dignity of the old, proud race from whence he had sprung, and returned home as pure and unsullied as on the day that he bid a final adieu to his Alma Mater and left his loved ones at home. On that fair and handsome brow there was no signet of dissipation, and the eye was as bright and sparkling as in the days of his fresh young boyhood. Tall and splendidly proportioned, with grace in his every movement, he might well have belonged to some prince of royal blood. Nature had set on him the true stamp of nobility. He was one of those rare and noble characters you might meet with but few times in course of a life-time. From his earliest boyhood he had abhorred falsehood, equivocation, deception. One of the most admirable traits of his character was the almost profound reverence and distinguished courtesy with which he treated his parents.

The very highest compliment that can be paid to a man is to say he is a gentleman at home, around his own hearthstone.

He was a man of striking individuality.

As we have said, Gilbert St. Maurice never equivocated, never indulged in mysteries, but drove straight to the point on any and all occasions. Yet sometimes his polished shafts of wit and satire cut keen and glittering as a blade from Damascus.

Such characters win, nay command, respect, be they where and with whom they may. There is a loftiness of purpose, a strength of will, a self-consciousness of power, or you may have it, an inborn superiority of character, that have always *ruled* weaker minds, and made them pliant as wax in your hands.

The return of Gilbert St. Maurice had been sudden. He had come from abroad because of the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand" that had been gathering in size and strength for years, until it loomed up black and threatening before us, and nearly obscured every ray of sunlight from our sky.

Sumter had fallen, war was proclaimed, and the whole South was rushing to arms in a blaze of enthusiasm. On the other

border, the immense hordes of the North were banding together and preparing to extinguish the South at one fell swoop.

The heart of the noble young man bounded high within him, and he longed to throw himself into battle and be foremost in the fray.

His father was an original secessionist, and had been nursing his wrath for years against the abolitionists of the North, and now it has grown into a "holy, righteous hatred," and fiery-hearted as he was, he had thrown himself heart and soul into the seething cauldron of the rebellion. Col. St. Maurice thought of nothing else, talked of nothing else, but the great cloud that had darkened our Southern sky. He was ready to gird on his son's armor, fond and proud of him as he had every right to be, and to bless him and bid him go forth to the good fight.

Ah! little thought he that the time would ever come when that magnificent structure, generations old, and the especial pride of a haughty race, would be laid low in the dust, and help to light the blaz-

ing pathway of Sherman in his "March to the Sea," and he himself in his old age be an outcast and a wanderer, homeless and uncared for, on the face of the earth.

Ah! well that a merciful Providence veils the "shadows of coming events" from our sight.

CHAPTER III.

THE PARTY.

THE *creme de la creme* for miles around had assembled to welcome home, after his long absence, the son and heir, and also to partake of the famed hospitality of the St. Maurices. The fairest and most beautiful of South Carolina's lovely daughters were there, in costly robes of sweeping satin, and the flashing of diamonds and the shimmer of pearls lent an almost regal air to the occasion. And many a cheek blushed crimson beneath the passionate glances bestowed upon them. Politicians, too, had gathered in knots, and discussed, with scowling brows, the present issue; for there were not a few, even in hot-headed South Carolina, who yet cherished some lingering remains of love for the old Union as it was.

However, all went "merry as a marriage bell." Champagne flowed freely, and

the laughter and the jest and the song went on into the "wee sma' hours ayant the twa'."

The whole house was a blaze of light from top to bottom. The window-sills were filled with the rarest exotics; the misty lace curtains looped back, the delicious breezes of May swept through the low, wide windows, steeped with the perfume of the roses and the honeysuckle, that lingered around one like the melody of some half-forgotten song that one had heard in a dream.

Later in the evening the moon rose in unclouded splendor, and lighted up the whole beautiful scene. How the roses glowed and burned with a deeper red, and the waters of the fountain sparkled in the moonlight, and the spray glistened like diamonds.

Could it be that war was so soon to devastate and depopulate the fairest land that the sun ever shown upon? that the song and the dance was to turn to weeping and gnashing of teeth? Could it be that the sparkle and sweetness was to turn

to gall, as bitter as wormwood? However, in process of time a change comes to everything, and the atmosphere is clearer and purer after a storm.

Gilbert St. Maurice moved among that gay, brilliant, laughing throng, scattering smiles and high good humor everywhere. Yet, ever and anon his keen, bright blue eyes wandered restlessly to the front entrance, where a mass of people were constantly passing in and out. At last, he stepped quickly forward to welcome a tall, beautiful girl who had just arrived. The young lady bore herself as regally as some haughty duchess, and was attended by two gentlemen. The elder gentleman's face wore a stern, set, forbidding expression, which betrayed a mind ill at ease with the gay company by which he was surrounded, and from the knot of wrinkles that deepened on his brow, it seemed that some perplexing question was agitating his mind at that particular moment.

It did one good to watch the younger gentleman's face—bright, sunshiny, with eyes brimming over with merriment, it

was very evident that the "ills of life" had touched this young gentleman but lightly, and from his appearance, if we may be permitted to judge from outside looks, admitting the time when troubles would eventually come to him, he would naturally be inclined to look under the cloud for the "silver lining," which is wise and well.

The new arrivals consisted of Major Hart, his son Victor and daughter Marion.

And now, while Gilbert St. Maurice has taken Marion Hart to sit beside the waters of the fountain, while he throws himself on the cool, dewy grass, in an indolent attitude, and drinks of the love-light from the deep hazel eyes, we will leave them to themselves, for a ruthless fate is soon to separate them—perhaps for a time, and perhaps forever—he to go forth to battle strong and rejoicing, animated by high hopes and brilliant resolves, to win laurels on the field of strife, while she will be left alone to mourn over a broken dream and a shadowed life.

Ah! why could they have not remained thus forever—forever, down into the very

dream of death, with heart to heart, and clasped hands, where the waters of the fountain murmur so deliciously, and the roses glow in the marvelous moonlight, and the young May winds whisper so lovingly through the fragrant shrubbery?

Is Gilbert St. Maurice to stand through all those freezing winter nights, with his musket hugged to his bosom, while waiting for the approach of the treacherous enemy on the swollen banks of the Potomac? Is he to linger, weary and sick and wounded, in a foul and loathesome prison, whilst daily subjected to the taunting insults of his inferiors, while inwardly his proud spirit chafes at the restraint that prudence compels him to put upon his tongue? Oh! the torture that is to wring his proud soul while he daily sees the polished musket of his guard, keeping his measured beat in front of his prison door. Oh! the long nights of bitter anguish, when no friendly white-winged messenger brings him tidings of his loved ones at home in far-off South Carolina.

If one could only see into the future

sometimes, it would only make the great, black shadows that darken our life loom up huger and blacker and more appalling. Yet sometimes we are almost ready to fly in the face of Providence, and question the wisdom of our Maker; and how much worse would it really be if we knew of the direful events about to happen to us! And with what superiority we arrogate to ourselves certain rights and privileges, and how loth we are to recognize the all-powerful hand of Providence in the disposition of the events of this life.

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CHAPTER IV.

MAJOR HART IS OPPOSED TO HIS DAUGHTER
MARRYING A SECESSIONIST. ALSO OP-
POSES HIS SON IN JOINING THE
CONFEDERATE ARMY.

Now that Gilbert St. Maurice was rushing so blindly and so madly into the "iniquitous business," as old Major Hart was pleased to style the new-born aspirant for national honors, to-wit: the young Confederacy, he swore by all that was holy and good that no daughter of his should disgrace his name by espousing a traitor and an "original secessionist"—something which he abhorred more than anything in the world. He had sternly commanded her to tell him so the evening of the party, either for him to abandon all idea of the army, or for his daughter to absolve herself from the promise of marriage.

The girl hugged her precious happiness

to her bosom, and put off the evil day of telling her lover as long as was possible ; yet the girl knew the time had to come, for she also knew full well how stern and unrelenting her father could be when terribly in earnest, as he was so much incensed at the authorities of his native State for the course they had taken.

Major Hart had lived for many years on the plantation adjoining that of Col. St. Maurice. He was respected on account of his great wealth, and feared also, and generally hated by his neighbors, whom he usually chose to regard with a species of contempt, and generally treated them as inferior beings, and tolerated them as an inevitable nuisance, occupying just so much space in the neighborhood, and no more—that is, those who were only moderately well off. He was just what a certain class of people would style a “purse-proud” aristocrat.

Gilbert St. Maurice and Marion Hart had been associated together from their earliest childhood, and they had no recollection of the time when they had not loved

each other. There had always been a tacit understanding between the two families that they were to be married when arrived at a suitable age. Previous to the time we write, there had never been heard a dissenting voice. They had been formally betrothed just before his trip to Europe, with the full, free approbation of all parties concerned.

You will understand now, how averse was the idea to Marion of telling her lover the cruel words of her tyrannical parent.

From a careless, free, and happy child, Marion Hart had grown into a tall and beautiful woman, gifted with a rare intellect, on which no pains or expense had been spared. Although her father was very tyrannical, and oftentimes seemed harsh and unnecessarily cruel to his children, yet he loved them both very dearly for all that, and was as proud of them as he knew how to be.

The morning after the party at the St. Maurices had dawned cloudy and cold. A storm had arisen during the night, and the wet, dreary morning that succeeded

was very different from the balmy loveliness of the previous evening.

The hands of the small clock on the dining-room mantle were pointing to the hour of nine—for these country people had city habits—just as the family were assembling at breakfast. Major Hart, in faultless attire—for if there was one redeeming trait in his character, and nearly everybody has some redeeming qualities, it was his extreme fastidiousness in regard to his personal appearance—took his seat at the foot of the table, deliberately unfolded a snowy damask napkin, placed it across his knees, and addressed his son, Victor, while his sad-faced, meek-looking wife, who stood in mortal dread of the disapprobation of her husband, and never dared express an opinion of her own in his presence, presided behind the costly silver coffee-urn.

“And so, Victor, you have actually had the effrontery to enroll your name in the regiment now forming for Virginia, after all my talk to you on the subject? Do you know, sir,” thundered the irate Major, “to

where your headlong hardihood is leading you? How dare you sit there so calm and composed, after all that I have said? What excuse will your fertile genius invent, sir, for a resolution so diametrically opposed to my often expressed and repeated views on this subject?"

That young gentleman was indeed composed, for he as deliberately transferred a smoking hot roll to his plate, broke it half in two and proceeded to spread both sides with butter as yellow as gold, tested the strength of his coffee, added sugar, then cream, before he vouchsafed a single syllable in reply to the tirade hurled at him by his indignant father.

A golden-throated songster warbled a roundelay from his swinging, gilded cage in the west window, filling the room with melody, and that was the only sound that broke the silence for the space of several minutes.

The mother at the head of the table trembled in anticipation of the altercation which she saw was imminent between her husband and her beloved only son, for she knew him of old, and feared him also.

Marion, who had remained silent during the conversation, or rather storm of words hurled at her brother's head, felt the deepest sympathy for him. Knowing his disposition as well as she did, she knew with what a mighty effort he was controlling his temper and forcing himself to speak calmly and even respectfully under such trying circumstances.

He was a remarkably handsome fellow, this Victor Hart, and he looked a hero, every inch of him, as he answered back, with the ring of the true metal in his voice :

“Father, from my earliest childhood I have no recollection of one single act of filial disobedience. Have I ever before, sir, failed in rendering the honor and respect due a kind, though, we sometimes think, unnecessarily harsh and stern parent?”

And Victor Hart raised his frank, open face, and clear, honest blue eyes, where truth shone in their sunny depths, to his father's face, and never flinched before the passionate fire that flashed from the other.

“Yet, sir, in this exceptional instance,

I prefer, and intend to act for myself, on my own responsibility, which I surely have a right to do. If it displeases you, I am sorry, truly and honestly sorry, and far more so than you can possibly imagine. Something within me tells me that the time is not far distant when we shall need all the love and sympathy we can get; and to have parted from one's father, with bitterness and recriminations on either side would be more than I could bear. And yet, so help me Heaven! I have enrolled my name on the banner of my country's defenders, and nobody—father, mother, brother, or sister—shall come between me and Duty. Nothing shall deter me from my unalterable resolution to fight it out to the bitter end, be it near or distant; and if it please the Ruler of nations that we should fail, let us have for an epitaph above our dead soldiers' graves—

ALL LOST SAVE HONOR!

God holds the destinies of nations in the palm of his right hand, and we are told

that not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge. There is a Providence which watches over us in all things, be they great or small. I can not fold my hands in inertness, and lead a life of luxury and ease, while my friends and comrades are sleeping on the tented field, awaiting the approach of the treacherous foe, that comes, armed with fire and sword, to sweep over the South like a fell destroyer. Into the hands of my God I commit myself; and if I be wrong, may he forgive me in that last dread hour when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known."

As he spoke, a burst of sunshine broke through a watery cloud, and came through the east window, and fell around the head of the noble young man with a golden halo, and then faded away as quickly as it came. Ah, how like the great bow of promise that spanned our Southern sky at the beginning of the war, and then faded away, almost as quickly as it came, in darkness and death and defeat! How like the brilliant victories that never in themselves amounted to anything beyond fill-

ing the newspapers with startling headings, and yet cost us so many precious lives, and like a "will-o-wisp," led us on through the swamps and wilderness and lost us in its tangled, labyrinthine depths! The small handful of Confederate soldiers contending against the powerful armies of the North, only numerically great, was like the brave three hundred at the pass of Thermopolæ. Nowhere on the record of history had men ever endured greater hardships, or fought with more abandon and superb courage; and, had all the soldiers and citizens done their duty as those ragged rebels who came home in May, 1865, with a pocketful of worthless Confederate scrip, and two dollars and a half in gold in their purses, we had not been where we are to-day. But it is like standing above the grave of some lost hope and echoing mournfully, "It might have been." The defeat of the South will always be to some of us a sore point, and it is hard not to infuse something of partisan bitterness in this record of past years and scenes.

But we have wandered away from the breakfast-table conversation.

Victor Hart had truthfully and manfully spoken his sentiments. He was not ashamed of what he had done, for next to his God and his mother he had loved the land that had given him birth. He sat waiting for his father's answer, while balancing his spoon across his coffee cup, abstractedly gazing into the bottom as if he was reading his future or destiny in the sugary sediment.

The answer came finally, full of fury and concentrated wrath; and we think if the lightning flashes of anger that blazed in his father's eyes could have annihilated him where he sat, he would have done so.

"Very well, sir; if you choose to go headlong to perdition in your blindness, I shall no longer consider it any affair of mine. You will all be caught and hung, what you justly deserve, with a traitor's rope around your necks. A Southern Confederacy, indeed! Ridiculous! Preposterous!"

Then, after having delivered himself of some of his bottled-up wrath, he turned to address his daughter, who had been gradually growing paler and paler ever since the conversation commenced. She expected, yet dreaded, the question she felt sure her father would ask her.

The mother looked at her daughter as her husband changed his position, preparatory to addressing her, and she longed, how vainly! to shield her from the coming tempest. The only consolation there was in the present aspect was that a fierce storm soon exhausts itself, and it was of little moment who tried to hush the roarings of the one that was roused that day.

“Well, Marion, I hope you have had more regard for my advice than your hot-headed brother, who has set all my authority at defiance. Have you told that cowardly, sneaking traitor and secessionist never to darken my door again until he tears away that infernal cockade from its conspicuous place on his hat?”

“No, sir,” replied Marion Hart, firmly, “I have not yet; I could not tell him words

so cruel at his own home, and just at his return from his long absence, when everything around us was so gay and bright and happy. I thought it would be best for him to visit me here, and then I could tell him all." And when she repeated the word "all," she bent low over her plate to conceal her emotion, for her eyes were full of unshed tears, and there was a tremor in her voice she could not conceal. At last, when she could no longer keep them back, they began to drop slowly, one by one. The sight of them, instead of softening her father's heart with pity, his lovely and ever dutiful daughter weeping over the proposed estrangement from her lover, only angered him; for if there was any one thing on the face of the earth for which he had never had any sympathy, it was a woman's tears. To cry, for the slightest provocation, had seemed to him to be the principal aim of their existence; for it appears that his wife had done but little else since her married life but weep over his harshness and cruelty. For her, the fine gold of her wedded life had

quickly turned to dross, and the romance of her love soon over. Therefore the sight of his daughter's tears only exasperated him the more.

“Whew! crying! You had better lament the day he was ever born than to see him turn traitor to his country; had better, by the memory of your past love, try to reclaim him to the right way, and let this precious ‘Southern Confederacy’ work out its own ruin, alone.”

The girl raised her tearful face proudly to her father's, and spoke out her sentiments, regardless of the consequences:

“Father, I agree with him in his sentiments. Let him fight for the South. She needs all the brave, true men she can get. I am willing, nay, anxious, for him to go, as much as I have loved him, and as dear as he seems to me at this moment. I should scorn him if he did not cast his fortunes with the South. He would be in my eyes a craven and a coward, if he were to remain at home; and all the deep affection I now bear for him would turn to bitterness and contempt; but I shall im-

plore the God of battles to keep my fond, true-hearted lover from danger and harm, for I know he is brave to the heart's core."

And Marion Hart, after having asserted her independence, turned and proudly swept her trailing robes from the dining-room, without having finished her breakfast.

That breakfast had been rather a dismal affair, considering the turn affairs had taken; and a more unhappy quartette than those four, who had met around the bountiful morning board, would have been hard to find. The antagonism of all present seemed being forced to the surface that morning, in a way that left bitter memories rankling in the bosom of each one.

"Is the world, the flesh, and the devil conspiring to set me crazy, or is it only an illusion of the brain, that my own children that I have reared and nurtured, defy me at my own table, and set up their ideas and opinions in opposition to my own? I never could have believed it possible."

And Major Hart passed his hand over his eyes to reassure himself, to see if he had not been dreaming. That his docile, civilly-spoken children should have set up and maintained their will in opposition to their father's, who had managed always to instill in their minds something like reverence—very nearly approaching awe—was something he could in nowise understand. However, owing to the state of affairs then existing, we will attribute the change to the abstract strength of the human intellect, rising out of gloom and throwing off bondage and finding utterance in free and independent speech.

CHAPTER V.

GILBERT ST. MAURICE VISITS HIS BETROTHED
IN HER OWN HOME, AND THERE LEARNS
THAT HER FATHER OPPOSES HIS DAUGH-
TER'S MARRIAGE WITH AN "ORIG-
INAL SECESSIONIST."

ACCORDING to an agreement made the previous evening, Gilbert presented himself at the residence of Major Hart on that same afternoon of the spirited passage of arms at the breakfast table. The girl was in perfect agony lest he should meet her father, and they should come to high words; for she knew how unconscious he was of the coming trouble, although he was perfectly aware in what light Major Hart viewed the present political issue, yet never dreaming that it could possibly affect them in their relations to each other. He had no thought that his violent animosity to the Southern Confederacy could

lead that far. Fortunately, after dinner that day, the Major remembered a business engagement he had in a neighboring town. So he rode directly away, and was detained until late in the afternoon; so the lovers were not interrupted in their conversation.

There was a favorite spot where they had so often dreamed away the happy summer hours, under the cool shadows of the tall trees that overlooked the banks of a swiftly flowing stream, that wound like a silver ribbon through meadow and wood. Thither they repaired.

It was a beautiful tableau—Marion Hart, with her scarlet shawl trailing around her, like the royal plumage of some bright bird, in vivid contrast to the young grasses and summer wild flowers, just springing into life and beauty, as frail themselves as all earthly hopes. It was still cloudy. Only occasionally the sun came through the rift of clouds, lighted up the earth for a moment, and was gone. It was as if the sun of happiness had gone down forever upon their young lives. It is the old,

old story, that we have heard from our childhood—man's breathless devotion and woman's constancy; yet being the victims of unfortunate circumstances, cruel fate often separates them widely, sometimes for years, and sometimes forever; yet for all that their grief was none the less poignant.

Marion Hart truthfully informed her lover of everything, in substance, that her father had said, withholding only the opprobrious epithets he had used concerning him. He was, of course, both surprised and annoyed, yet he sat with bowed head and averted eyes, never an exclamation of regret or astonishment escaping him during the entire recital. At last, when Marion had finished, she looked up to mark the effect her words had on him; but the gloom and despondency that had overtaken him with the first shock of her communication had passed away, and the light of a brave hopefulness had cleared his countenance. For her sake; for the sake of the woman he had loved so well, and who reposed so much confidence in

him, he resolved to be cheerful, and controlling himself as best he might, withhold from her the knowledge of the pain her words had given him.

Marion had comforted her lover all she could after she had finished telling him what had passed between her father, her brother, and herself. Woman-like, she was willing to endure the "rainy day" and wait for the sunshine that she felt would all come in good time. After all, what would life be, divested of the charming illusions of hope? Would it be worth living for, if we were compelled to accept every situation practically and literally in the affairs of every-day life? She told him to "wait and hope." Oh, golden words of hope and promise, that light and gladden so many dark and gloomy pathways. That when the war was over she would yet be his wife; that day and night her prayers should ascend to Heaven for his welfare; not to despond, but go forth to meet the future with a brave heart, and accept cheerfully whatever it held in store for him, trusting all to God.

Up to this time Gilbert had not uttered a word—only a spasm of pain, once in a while, contracted his brow. It had been the dearest wish of this young man's life to make her his wife before he went to Virginia, and now that his dream was broken, and his hopes wrecked, it did seem very hard and cruel to this high-spirited young man; yet the very courage and calmness of Marion sustained him, and his voice at last found utterance:

“I will be brave in this dark hour of trial. I shall wait and hope; and if God spares me to come home after the wars are over, we shall love each other all the better for our long and cruel separation. I shall dream of you, my darling, day and night; and when, after the fatigues of the day are over, and I shall lie on the tented field, with the stars shining so kindly above me, how I shall love to think of you and all the sweet, happy past! I shall know, too, my love (for in this hour you are dearer to me than you ever were before), that you will be thinking of me. Never, in all my wanderings in Europe, did I ever

have a thought for any but you, even though high-born, titled ladies smiled so kindly upon me. My thoughts were always in my far-off native State, and the memory of your dear, beautiful face, and deep, hazel eyes, and bonny brown hair, kept me true to my allegiance. I shall not forget you now. Oh, my Love! it is hard indeed to leave you thus. The very thought of it makes me shudder."

And a tear that was no disgrace to the manhood of Gilbert St. Maurice dropped on the white hand that lay passively in his.

The songs of the birds was the only sound that broke the silence for the space of several minutes. Ah, what care or trouble had they? The waters of the brook ran swifter onward with a lulling musical sound. In other days how sweet had been the sound; but now it fell unheeded on the ears that were dead to all things else save the memory of their own grief.

In a few weeks more Gilbert would be gone, and also her brother Victor, and then the future would be dreary enough.

Dry desolation would assume the place of lost happiness and past pleasures. Her mother's society would be her only comfort, for precious little sympathy had she any right to expect from her tyrannical father, who would only be the more provoked to find his daughter lamenting the absence of her "traitor lover." For his will was as a rod of iron, and his decrees as unalterable as those of the Medes and Persians; and to have offended him was in his eyes a crime as heinous as to have committed the "unpardonable sin" that ministers declaim so loudly from the pulpit.

During the interval of time that elapsed before leaving for Virginia, Gilbert and Marion met often at this favorite tryst, and derived such comfort as best they might in each other's society while together.

In the meantime the regiment is regularly enrolled and equipped, and Victor Hart was elected captain of a company, which news being communicated to his father, that gentleman expressed his disapprobation by a contemptuous grunt.

Gilbert St. Maurice was a private soldier in the same company, and burning and eager for active movements.

We all remember at the beginning of the war how anxious and eager were those young gentlemen denominated "Chivalry" by the North, in derision, to engage the "blue bonnets from over the border" in a genuine, *bona fide* battle, with colors flying, drums beating, and gay, triumphant music swelling on the breeze. And then there came a time when fighting, divested of its romance, came in good, hard earnest, without their having the trouble to go after it.

CHAPTER VI.

ST. MAURICE GOES TO VIRGINIA—MARION HART
HOLDS A LEVEE IN THE PARLOR THE EVEN-
ING PREVIOUS TO THE REGIMENT LEAV-
ING FOR THE SEAT OF WAR—AN IM-
PROMPTU BANQUET AND FINAL
FAREWELLS.

THE time had arrived for the regiment that had been drilling and preparing, under its accomplished masters, to start for the seat of war. Marion Hart bade her lover a long farewell at their favorite place of meeting, on the ledge of rocks by the brook side, where they had met each afternoon for several weeks.

We will pass over the agony that filled their young hearts, when their hands closed over each other for the last time ; it might be for long years, and it might be forever. There is a grief that is too sacred to be exposed to the world, which only laughs

lightly and treats with contempt or indifference the holiest, purest emotions of the human heart ; yet, nevertheless, that grief is often sublime in itself, for it suffers in silence and is strong.

Marion Hart sat there long after the sound of her lover's footsteps had died away in the distance, with her face buried in her hands, thinking—who knows what? in that bitter hour—until the gathering gloom of the evening warned her that night was fast approaching, and she a full half mile from home.

Once, when her lover had gone but a few steps, he stopped and folded his arms and gazed long and intently at the bowed form that quivered and shook with the agony she could not control. One last, struggling sunbeam burst through the clouds that ever and anon rolled in masses across the western sky, and lighted up the braids of her bonny brown hair. It was a scene he never forgot. It haunted him to the day of his death. The girl that he loved so intensely sitting there in the fading light of that spring afternoon,

bowed in sorrow at the thought of parting for so long a time from him whom she had loved so well, the winds sighing through the tall trees so mournfully and low, as if they felt sympathy with human grief, the clouds with golden edges in the far west, were all daguerreotyped forever on his memory. All through the long night that followed he saw the bowed form, heard the heavy sobs that shook the slight form of her who was the life of his life. Laugh not in scorn, oh, mockers! Why "comes not death to those who mourn?" that we are forced to hush the wild throbbings of our hearts, and command them "peace, be still," when they are breaking with the weight of an untold agony; and force a composed exterior and pleasant smiles for those with whom we are associated. The world deals in criticisms not sparingly, and has but little sympathy for outward manifestations of grief, be the cause what it may.

Marion Hart was outwardly calm. Although she hugged her great sorrow to her bosom, yet she put it far out of sight.

As soon as she reached home, she went immediately to her own room and exchanged her gray walking suit for a cool, flowing, white muslin, with delicate lace as filmy and fragile as a cob-web, around the neck and sleeves; while in her hair she placed a cluster of exquisite, creamy, fragrant rose-buds. Verily, she was the incarnation of delicacy, purity, and refinement—just such a being that men of passionate, worshiping natures would peril their very souls' salvation for.

All that evening she entertained a parlor full of gentlemen callers, with sweet, gentle, lady-like grace; and if there was no sunshine in her heart that evening, no one of the gentlemen visitors would have supposed so from the gay manner and brilliant repartee. She laughed and jested and sang, seemingly as gay and happy and thoughtless as in the years gone by.

The young gentlemen were all members of the regiment that on the morrow would be *en route* for Virginia. There was only one person in that room, her brother Victor, who knew how his sister was forc-

ing herself to be entertaining and entertained. With the keen intuition of love he saw the forced smile, and his heart ached for the sorrow that he had no power to help.

It was a gay group of young gallants that made themselves merry that evening, previous to their leaving for Virginia. It was well they saw not the Blood and Sorrow and Tears that would eventually come to them, or perhaps the gay laugh would have ended in a sigh, and the smile would have frozen on their lips if the great panorama of the future, baleful and threatening, could have passed in review before them. Therefore, it is right to laugh when we can, and not to anticipate trouble.

Later in the evening, after music and song and much gay bantering, the company were invited into the dining-room to partake of refreshments that always seemed on hand in this well-appointed establishment. The young gentlemen were quite willing to regale their physical appetite with something substantial after that "feast of reason and flow of soul."

The bountifully-spread table never came amiss, with all manner of cold game, jellies, pickles, salads, fruits, and such like edibles that tempt the fallible flesh. A large white cake, beautifully frosted, and accompanied by the most delicious ice-creams, graced the center of the table. In fact, it was the most elegant impromptu collation that could well be imagined.

Marion was the graceful hostess, and dispensed the hospitalities of the table with charming elegance and self-possession. She laughed, and returned jest for jest with her friends, who, most probably, would never stand there again, under the mellow, dreamy radiance that fell on the cut glass and elaborately carven silver that decorated the repast. She was her own individual self, pure in heart and true in intent and purpose, and no sickly sentimentalist, parading her grief before curious eyes.

Verner Gray, a gay and thoughtless youth of twenty, who had been the petted child of wealth and luxury all his life, lifted from the table, near where he stood by

Marion, a napkin of the finest damask, with a delicate crimson border, and a heavy silver fork with "Hart" engraven on the handle, and drew a long, deep sigh, with the most comical face imaginable, and said :

"Look, good friends; does it not make your heart ache to look at all these good things that will never gladden your eyes again after to-night? My fine friends, you and I, after to-day, will have said farewell to the splendors of the past. Cut glass and gilt china will soon be a dream of the days that were."

Howard Elliott lifted a finger-bowl from the table and said gaily :

"I do not think we will have much use for anything of this kind when we go to roughing it in the 'Old Dominion.'"

And Marion replied with a pleasant smile that she "expected, when her former friends returned to the refinements of their old homes, they would have forgotten the proprieties of civilized life, and require to be taught, as the children say, 'manners' when they come home."

Verner Gray, who was the most fastidious mortal that ever lived, replied :

“ Well, I, for one, expect to observe some of the decencies of life if I am a soldier ; and as long as there is any soap and water in the world, I intend to be clean. If my servant deserts me, and I have no doubt he will the very first opportunity he gets, I am going to get me a tub, and roll up my sleeves and take lessons in the mystery of the laundry.”

A gay laugh followed this patriotic outburst. The idea of Verner Gray, with his immaculate shirt front, and diamond studs, and polished boots, with his white hands and delicately pared nails, bending over a “ wash tub,” was supremely ludicrous ; he who had never caught and saddled his own horse in his life, and whose principal amusement was whispering “ tender nothings ” in the ears of some reigning belle, while whiling away the long, idle, morning hours.

Victor Hart laughed, and said :

“ O Verner, Verner, my friend, from the bottom of my heart do I pity you, doomed

as you are to the life you have chosen. As for myself, it will make but little difference, for I can adapt myself to circumstances, however unpleasant; but you—what will you do without your dressing case, and perfumed soaps, and nail brushes, and all the elegant appliances of the toilet, which hitherto you have considered indispensable?”

Marion spoke up in her friend's defense:

“Victor, I think you are mistaken in regard to Mr. Gray's character. You know it is only in adversity our latent talents are developed; and I think Mr. Gray will prove the right man in the right place when the time comes. He has never yet had occasion to test his strength; only allow him a fair trial.”

“Thank you, Miss Marion, for coming so gallantly to my rescue. Commend me, if you please, to the ready wit of a woman when one gets into trouble.”

Howard Elliott spoke sententiously:

“The next generation of men and women will be something to count on; for as

sure as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and I believe that is a fact with which we have been familiar from our childhood's earliest recollection, slavery is doomed; yea, doomed, and the 'irrepressible conflict' is to hand; we may, and will, do all we can to avert the coming tempest; but it is bound to break in ungovernable fury over our defenseless heads."

"The mere fact of losing our servants is of small importance, compared to the servile bondage we will be compelled to endure under the 'powers that be' if we lose the issue," said Victor Hart. "I shall fight, of course, as a matter of principle, and because I am a South Carolinian, to the 'manor born,' which, you all know, in our estimation is but a stone's throw from paradise and but one remove from nobility. Besides, I want to uphold the honor of the plucky Palmetto State, which was the first that had the moral courage to bang away at the 'stars and stripes.' I long to be in my saddle and away to the wars—softly, lest my good father hear me.

Besides, I think my captain's uniform vastly becoming."

And the newly-fledged captain drew his tall form to its full height with a laughable air of mock dignity. He was right. The gray uniform, buttoned to the throat over the full, broad chest, resplendent in gilt braid and brass buttons, was becoming; there was no doubt about that.

"And I expect, Gray," continued Victor Hart, "when you and I come home from the wars, if we should be among the fortunate ones to be spared, we will find our old servants lounging around in velvet dressing gowns, and those among them who used to black our boots and saddle our horses, puzzling their thick skulls over Euclid, and regaling their literary appetites with Cæsar and Horace. Won't it be laughable, though!"

Little did Captain Hart know how near the truth his random, jesting remarks would reach.

The clock on the mantle tolled out twelve silvery chimes, and the gay revelers started in laughing surprise. Will

Houghton, who had talked but little during the evening, and was extremely given to poetry, executed a most profound *salaam*, with his hand on his heart, and quoted to Marion—

“Too late I staid; forgive the crime;
Unheeded flew the hours;
How noiseless falls the foot of time
That only treads on flowers.”

Victor Hart said: “Sister mine, we will excuse you now, as we want to touch glasses once more together, the last time perhaps for many of us.”

And Marion bowed, and went through the ceremony of a cordial hand-shaking with each one of the gay young gentlemen who had been her sworn champions and friends for a long time; and bidding them take excellent care of her darling brother in case of sickness, or should he be so unfortunate as to get wounded, she retired to her room to dream of, and weep over, the absence of one who should have been there and was not.

Victor ordered the servants to bring him several bottles of champagne, which,

unscrewed, the corks flew against the ceiling with a resounding noise, and their glasses rang against each other as they pledged themselves in many a sparkling bumper, and drank to each other's welfare in the new, untried life of a soldier.

"Let us be merry to-night, for to-morrow we will be far from the scenes of our childhood," they all cried; and merry they certainly were for full another hour, and when the clock rang out the solemn hour of one, the young gentlemen mounted their horses and turned homeward.

The song and the wine had made Will Stanhope, one of the gay party, very merry, and, in fact, it was as much as he could do to walk comfortably. As a parting toast to Victor, he quoted:

"Were it the last drop in the bottle, Victor,
And I just about to drink;
Ere my reeling body fell, Victor,
'Tis to *thee* that I would drink!"

"Good-night, old fellows," said Victor, at the gate. "I will see you all in the morning;" and he turned and slowly walked up the shelled walk to the house,

and sat down on the front balcony. The clouds had passed away, and the stars had come out in all their brilliant summer loveliness. Victor heard the shouts of his gay companions, and saw the gleam of their cigars which shone like specks of fire through the woods, and thought sadly of what the future held in store for them. Yet, for all that, his was a cheerful disposition, and he was very much inclined to look on the sunny side of affairs in general.

CHAPTER VII.

VICTOR VISITS HIS MOTHER AND RECEIVES HER
BLESSING BEFORE HE RETIRES—THE SO-
CIAL POSITION OF SOUTHERN SOLDIERS
IN GENERAL—A COMPLIMENT
TO TENNESSEE.

VICTOR, after dreaming a long time on the front balcony, rose, and on his way to his own room, knocked at his mother's door and was admitted. He saw a faint line of light gleaming under the door, and he knew she was yet up and waiting for him. How the mother's heart yearned over her darling son who would leave her on the coming morrow! So she had patiently waited until his friends had retired, to have one more heart-felt communion with her son, witnessed by no eye save that of her God.

This Victor Hart had always been a dutiful son, loving and affectionate, and had

many times shielded his mother from the fury of his father when highly exasperated. Now he was going away—is it any wonder that the thought nearly broke her heart? Yet for all that she was a true Southern woman, and gave her son ungrudgingly in his country's defense. She pointed out the many temptations that would beset him in camp-life, and implored him by the memory of his mother to be true to himself, and not permit himself to be corrupted by those with whom he would be compelled to associate. And when she had finished, she put in his hands a beautifully bound pocket bible, on which she had, in her own exquisite hand, written his name, and just under the name: "My son, if Satan tempt thee, put him far from thee." Victor Hart put his arms around his mother's neck and wept unrestrainedly, for he was not ashamed of the love he bore his kind mother, and after promising all she asked of him, tenderly kissed her good-night, and retired to his room to snatch a few hours of sleep before morning.

We will pass over the parting, the tears and bouquets, and waving of handkerchiefs, and bands playing, the shouting and cheering that followed the fine-looking regiment to the way-side station. Such scenes will always be remembered by those who saw the "brave soldier boys," when they set out for the wars.

We all remember the feeling of desolation that attended us home, when our gallant friends bade us a merry adieu, and we found ourselves wondering how we were to amuse and occupy our time during their long absence. With what avidity we devoured the newspapers to see if any battles had been fought, and if any of those whom we knew were engaged in them. When we think of all this now, the blood goes bounding through our veins with increased rapidity, and again we live over the pleasures and sorrows that came to us all during the years of the war that followed. All the States responded gallantly to the call for troops, and the Southern army was composed of the *elite* of the South. The first and best

young men from all the Southern States stood in the ranks, and carried their muskets and knapsacks, many a time with bare, bleeding feet, hungry and illy clad, on long, hard, forced marches everywhere, over frozen, snowy hills, with a heroism unparalleled in the record of history. Is it any wonder that to-day we have not one atom of respect for those who remained at home, wrapt in warm blankets and slept on downy pillows? Yet I confess the truth; we have more respect for those who, staying at home out of harm's reach, although not fighting for the South, yet at the same time did nothing against it, than for those "citizens," who, when the Yankee bands began to play, forgot they were Southerners, and met the blue-coated invaders in a fraternal embrace. How astonished some of us were to see men whom we thought had the best feeling in the world for the South, suddenly, as the caterpillar emerges into a gorgeous butterfly, develop into a full-blown pink of Yankee Unionism. These same men had a few weeks previous helped, with their money out of

their own individual pockets, to equip whole companies of Confederate soldiers, buying army blankets, clothing and canteens, and sent them on their way rejoicing, with words of cheer and encouragement, when lo, and behold! their guns have but few times echoed back from the Potomac, when we find we have harbored in our unsuspecting ignorance a viper that with concealed poison is only awaiting a suitable opportunity to bury its fangs in our most vital parts.

We presume there were "many things dreamed of in their philosophy," and these craven-hearted ones had a motive in so doing. However, let it pass.

Our boys were equal to the emergency, and showed of what metal they were made. Our native State, Tennessee, suffered no loss of self-respect in those first years of the great civil conflict, and many of her brave sons lie asleep on the soil of Virginia, within a stone's throw of the spot where the Grays and the Blues met in mortal combat, where the sabres clashed and the guns thundered.

The sunshine smiles to-day, and the skies have as tender a blue as in the days when high hopes animated us to brave and heroic deeds; yet a sadness which we can not help tinges our whole being when those olden days come back to us in our memory.

We will transcribe a letter from Victor Hart to his sister Marion from Virginia :

IN CAMP, July, 1861.

DEAR MARION: I know you are dying for news of your dear, devoted, only brother. We had a taste of fighting at Manassas. Of course you have devoured the newspapers containing news of the great battle, how the Yankees fled pell mell, helter skelter, like frightened sheep before the "chivalry" of the South. If there is any music in the cannon's roar, we certainly heard it; but oh, we drove them though! and I tell you it was some fun to see the "invincible North" show the "white feather."

You were right, my dear sister, as I believe you generally are, about Verner Gray; he is brave to the heart's core, and as true as steel. I know you would have been amused at a little incident that happened in camp not long ago, soon after we came to Virginia. You know how fastidious Gray has always been, and how unmercifully we joked him on that last evening at home, the night before we started to the wars. Verner's mother, ever thoughtful of her son's comfort and his excessive great regard for the "purple and fine linen," metaphorically speaking, packed in his valise, among fine handkerchiefs, plenty of collars and cravats, two dozen damask towels, with heavy crimson borders, and his aristo-

cratic cognomen, "Verner Gray," embroidered in scarlet cotton on the corner of each of them, done, probably, by the fairy fingers of some of Gray's lady friends.

Apropos to that, I think I have enough slippers, needle-books, pin-cushions, and like articles, to set up a fancy store, given me by fair friends in old South Carolina.

Well, as I was going on to relate, one day as Gray was performing his morning ablutions, which he has always faithfully attended to, (he has not had to wash his own clothes yet) a burly Irishman stepped forward and appropriated the shining damask, redolent with the odor of the "perfume sachet," that was packed with it in his valise, to his own individual use. The righteous indignation of Gray was laughable to behold, only he was terribly in earnest. I think he could have struck down the unconscious malefactor where he stood. The boys shouted with glee, until they made the welkin ring, and told Gray it was a lesson he had best commit to memory, that there was no such thing as "private property" in camp life. The little incident afforded a good deal of diversion in camp. We have a jolly time out here, sure, and some of us enjoy it hugely.

A lot of us were in Richmond last week, and attended a dance at the "Spotswood;" and hot as it was, we danced until three o'clock. I had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of a good many Richmond ladies, and found them very entertaining and cultivated. The ladies are certainly very patriotically inclined in regard to dress, for I saw elegant young ladies with sweeping trains of "red, white and red" in silk, while others simply wore a shield of blue satin, on which was embroidered in gold, the seven original Confederate States. A great many celebrities were present, and all rejoicing over the victory, which really does not amount to a row of pins. The hard time is to come yet; but we will not anticipate trouble, as it generally comes soon enough.

Gilbert was with us at this ball, and was the cynosure of many admiring eyes. In every direction I heard ladies ask-

ing who the "handsome" young man was; and the answer came as regularly from our party, "Gilbert St. Maurice; he left his sweetheart in the Palmetto State," which considerably abated their interest in him; but I know you would be amused to see some of our married men trying to pass themselves off as single, and in a good many instances they succeed. They think it will interfere with their having a "good time" if it is known they are married. Well, maybe there is no harm in it, but I confess I do not see it in that light.

Love to all. Write soon to your brother.

VICTOR.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM VIRGINIA.

WE make an extract from a letter, written by Victor Hart to his sister Marion two months later, for he was an affectionate brother and a dutiful correspondent, entering largely into details, which always increases the interest of a letter.

In the letter Victor goes on to say :

“Gilbert, as you are aware, belongs to a band of ubiquitous cavalry that scours the country for miles around, and leads a life full of stirring scenes and adventures. He brings us all sorts of news, and many a time great bundles of Northern newspapers, in which we learn exactly what our Northern friends think of Southern prowess. They are candid enough to acknowledge that they have a “powerful foe” to deal with, led and controlled by such men as Robert E.

Lee, Jo. Johnson, with Davis at the head of the cabinet. They say they have brains as well as Southern valor to contend against. So much we learn through the papers that Gilbert brings us. Gilbert is ever in the saddle, here, there, and everywhere; his keen eyes ever on the *qui vive* for adventure. He has plenty of fighting to do, which, he declares, warms the blood and gives him an appetite for his breakfast. The men adore him; and it is a superb sight to see him ride up to the very mouth of the cannon, deliver a volley and retire, while the blue coats are banging away at him. The men declare that he bears a charmed life, for time and again he has been under a very storm of grape and canister, that would blanch your cheek, and almost still the pulsations of your heart, and evidently with the keenest relish.

“Well, sister mine, I believe I am falling in love. You know when I left South Carolina I was ‘heart-whole and fancy free;’ well, it is quite the reverse now; a certain pair of very brown eyes and a

cloud of golden hair, a very witching expression, nightly distracts my slumbers, inasmuch as I lie and gaze at the myriads of summer stars, and quote to myself those beautiful lines of Byron :

“She walks in beauty like the night,” etc.

The young lady who has been so fortunate as to win my heart is the daughter of a Confederate official, in high authority at Richmond, and in her veins flows the “blue blood” of the South. She is very popular at Richmond, and has whole regiments of hearts laid at her feet daily ; but it seems that your humble (?) brother is the one who stands highest in her affections. But more anon.

“My kindest regards to all at home, and my father particularly, and a thousand kisses for my dear mother ; and say to her, please, that I have obeyed her injunctions to the letter, and do not indulge in any bad habits, which I know will be a gratification to her.

“Write soon, and tell me all the news from home ; and tell Verner’s sweetheart

that she had better have a care or she will lose her handsome lover; he is making sad havoc among the fair ladies at Richmond, and being something of a favorite at head-quarters, he gets special leave of absence and makes a visit there nearly every week. You know he has a great many relatives there who move in the first circles, and he has cultivated an extensive acquaintance among the ladies; and, to confess the truth, he does considerable flirting, which may be right or may be wrong; it is not for me to sit in judgment on a brother soldier.

“Love to all, once more; and write me a long, newsy letter—everything you can think of. Your loving brother.

“VICTOR HART.”

Victor Hart was right in the statement that the men in the regiment to which Gilbert St. Maurice belonged adored him. And well they might, for he was always on hand whenever there was any fighting to do; and when sickness prostrated the stalwart forms of his brother soldiers, he was

ever present, calming the delirious by the cool touch of his shapely white hand, and placing iced cloths on the sick men's heads, causing them to murmur of running brooks and green fields, the scenes of their childhood and the delights and comforts of home; his hand often sought the depths of his pocket and abstracted the last dollar to purchase some dainty for the sick and wounded, which gratification they would otherwise have been compelled to forego but for the generosity of the gentle heart which could not look unmoved on their sufferings.

We are not painting an ideal hero for an idle gratification, but a true, noble-souled man, who lived his life, and moved and acted just as we are describing him.

Such was the true heroism of soldiering, causing many an embittered heart to look kindly on their race in their last moments of intercourse with mankind here. Gilbert St. Maurice was the embodiment of that grandest, purest type of all lives—a Christian soldier. He it was that moved with noiseless tread among the suffering,

and administered comfort where he could, and wept bitter tears over the cold faces and eyes, closed in death, of some delicate youth, far away from home and on the field of battle. He it was who knelt in the far midnight and offered up a prayer for the soul of some comrade in arms who was done with all things earthly, and just wetting his feet in the river of eternity. And many a time on the solemn night air has come the sound of St. Maurice's voice, singing a requiem for some soul that was passing. How many a time has the sounds of merriment ceased and the gay laugh been hushed in wonder as that sad trembling voice rang out so mournfully—a voice which was full of sorrow and unshed tears, and which touched you with its pathetic cadence in spite of yourself. His hand it was that plucked the wild flowers that grew in the woods, and wove them into a chaplet of beauty, and placed them above the grave of some beloved comrade, which kind, delicate attention won for him the soubriquet of the “man with a woman's heart.”

If Marion Hart could only have seen her lover on these errands of mercy, she, with her passionate, æsthetic nature, would have fallen at his feet and worshiped him, as the Hindoo maiden who pours out her life blood at the feet of her idol god. His influence—the divine influence of religion and truth which proclaims not itself from the house-tops, but is acted out in everyday life—was beginning to be felt throughout the army. How true it is that men will instinctively respect that religion which they know is not false! Soldiers no longer indulged in profane language in St. Maurice's presence. They began to regard him as a superior being, and, accordingly, staid the hot words of anger that leaped to their lips in moments of extreme provocation. You may believe it or not, but the majesty of truth will assert itself; and men, with a submission they can not help, will acknowledge and bow before that religion which daily purifies our thoughts and actions, and is no farce.

CHAPTER IX.

ST. MAURICE IS TAKEN PRISONER—CITIZENS FROM THE SOUTH WHO HAVE TURNED TRAITOR, COME TO PRISON AND ADVISE HIM TO DESERT AND GO HOME—HE FLATLY REFUSES, AND STANDS TRUE TO HIS COLORS.

MARION'S lover kept her fully informed of all his movements. The long letters which he wrote to her, full of pathos, of fire and enthusiasm, tempered, as it were, with Christian moderation, were the next thing to being with him. There is something pleasant in the thought of that heart communion with a dearly loved friend, separated from you by weary miles of space. How she poured over them until every word was engraven on her memory, and thought of the constancy and devotion which spoke to her from every line! Strange to say, her father never inter-

ferred, and paid but little heed to the mail that came and went to his daughter. It was a leniency she had not expected, and for which she was not prepared. She could have gone on her bended knees and thanked him, such was the depth and humility of this proud girl's love. Whenever she saw the superscription she went to the old spot under the shadows of the giant oaks, and casting herself on the ground, literally devoured the precious contents.

Once there came news that Gilbert St. Maurice was wounded, and a prisoner in the enemy's hands, at which the girl nearly went frantic. For months he lingered, faint and sick and wounded, and longing for the sight of the loved ones at home; and yet no thought of faithlessness to his native State, to his honor be it said, ever sullied his mind. Yet there were men, who were a disgrace to the State that gave them birth, who came with a moral cowardice unparalleled in the history of nations, and persuaded their poor, weak, faint-hearted sons who were not brave

enough to stem the fiery tide, to desert their country's standard in its darkest hour of trial, and go home. Think of it, oh, false-hearted fathers, and may a blush of shame stain your cheeks to crimson, even at this late hour!

The insidious voice of the tempter tried to whisper in the ear of St. Maurice that the South's days of victory were over, and that it was only a "question of time," and an "unnecessary lengthening of the bloody contest, for them to remain longer in the ranks;" to come and go with them, while a magnanimous enemy "awaited them with open arms." We all remember how it was, and can not wonder that the banner of the South rested under a shadow and a cloud, while thousands of her sworn allies were daily deserting to the enemy, who sang triumphant pæans over the degradation of their opponents. But St. Maurice had no idea of playing a second edition of the prodigal son for the amusement of future generations. He scornfully drove the tempter from him, and told him to "go back to his Yankee friends,

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and, if need be, hug them to his bosom, and dine on the fatted calf, if it suited his fancy; that in casting his fortune with the South, he intended to remain unto the end, even if that end lead unto death." Principle governed him in his motives, and actuated him in his conduct, and it was proven to the world that such a quality did actually exist even in this age of corruption and iniquity.

St. Maurice at last grew better, and, as his strength returned, was regularly exchanged, and once more entered on the old life he had loved so well, with renewed vigor, in a distant field.

One day, not long before St. Maurice left prison, as he was taking a breath of fresh air in the allotted inclosure, a tiny note, written on delicately-tinted French paper, fragrant with the odor of violets, and written in a faint Italian hand, fluttered at his feet, bearing his superscription. It might have been blown there by the wind; it was impossible to tell where it came from. It contained the following defiant lines, and to the day of his death St.

Maurice never knew where it came from. The paper ran thus :

“GILBERT ST. MAURICE—I know of you, but you may never know me; but for the sake of the “red cross flag,” be true to yourself, and do not let those craven-hearted citizens bring everlasting disgrace on your head. They have come here for the purpose of depriving the South of her soldiers in this her darkest hour. Drive them from you, for ‘behind the clouds is the sun still shining.’

“N’IMPORTE.”

St. Maurice read and re-read the words of cheer that floated so mysteriously to his feet, and yet he had no clue to the unknown writer. He folded the precious paper, so romantically conveyed to him, among other written treasures, and it was found in his trunk after his death.

CHAPTER X.

VICTOR IS TRANSFERRED TO MIDDLE TENNESSEE—ST. MAURICE GETS A TRANSFER TO BE WITH HIS FRIEND—THE BATTLE OF RICHMOND—PERRYVILLE, KENTUCKY—FORREST'S RAID ON MURFREESBORO.

IN the meantime Victor Hart had been transferred from the Army of Northern Virginia to the Army of Middle Tennessee. St. Maurice, returning to Virginia and finding his friend gone, applied to headquarters, where he was personally well known and a great favorite, and succeeded in getting a position on the staff of a general of considerable distinction in the same division of his friend Hart, who had been promoted, for gallantry on the field, to the rank of major, and now we find them with the army of Bragg, which had entered Kentucky, and fought the battles

of Richmond and Perryville, and now was falling back with the loss of many gallant Tennesseans. Wharton, Wendel, and Butler had slept the sleep of the brave at Richmond, Kentucky; Colonel John Patterson, of the fearless "Rock City Guards," fell fighting gallantly at the head of his regiment at Perryville; poor John Pendleton had his head blown off by a cannon ball, so that his friends with difficulty recognized his body where it was found after the battle was over. And then Bragg was falling back—the same old story. When did we ever have a victory and were able to hold the ground? We put our enemies to flight, we scattered them in confusion, and we fancied we had gained a mighty victory, but they came with renewed forces—with thrice as many as before—and we were compelled to "fall back," until the very sound of the words made us sick. One ray of hope brightened our gloomy prospects in Middle Tennessee. Buell was also falling back; and just before his army reached Murfreesboro, there occurred one of the most brilliant

cavalry dashes of the war. And even though we should live a hundred years, the very recollection would quicken our pulses and send a thrill through our whole being.

The thirteenth of July, 1862, dawned as lovely a Sabbath as we ever saw. The citizens of Murfreesboro were sleeping peacefully and dreaming of their absent friends, when suddenly the holy stillness of the morning was broken by triumphant shouts, the tramp of cavalry, and the rattle of musketry! We sprang from our beds and rushed to the windows to see the streets full of gray-coated, dusty cavalrymen, who, under the leadership of the fearless Forrest, had ridden hard and long for Murfreesboro, while bang! bang! bang! was heard in every direction. The glad cry of "our boys have come" rang from one end of the town to the other, and staid, elderly citizens clapped their hands in delight and welcomed gladly our deliverers. Some of the ladies were frantic, which amused the soldiers very much.

We feel that our pen is inadequate to do justice to the scene, and we ask you, old citizens of Murfreesboro, was not that day, when the rebels burst so suddenly upon you, the happiest day you ever experienced during the war? I think you will answer "Yes," that the unexpected sight of the boys in gray was the most refreshing sight that had gladdened your eyes for many a weary day. Well we might be delighted; for many months since the fall of Fort Donelson, we had seen nothing save Yankees—coming, going, riding and walking. They enjoyed themselves in fancied security, and some of them had commenced to build for themselves comfortable winter quarters, thinking they had come to Murfreesboro to stay forever. Others gathered blackberries to sell, and it was no uncommon thing to see one of those gallant defenders of the "stars and stripes" present himself at our back-doors with a bucket full of luscious berries, for which he only asked the small sum of a "quarter." We wish we could commit to print the inimi-

table Yankee brogue with which they pronounced the word "quarter." We will leave that to the imagination of all those familiar with the Yankee dialect.

But to return to the "raiders." Forrest had just received his commission as brigadier general, and made straightway for Murfreesboro. May God bless him to-day, wherever he may be, and the gallant heroes of the old Thirteenth.

The whole affair was a decided surprise, and reflects infinite credit on those who planned the raid. The Confederacy had no braver, more gallant man than Captain Ed. Arnold, who came in advance and captured the pickets *asleep* on their posts, in fancied security, without a gun being fired. After the capture of the out-post pickets there was no obstacle in the way. Captain Arnold, with Wharton at the head of his brave Texas Rangers and Tennesseans, made a dash at the Ninth Michigan, which was camping near Maney's Spring, and rode headlong into camp over everything, and found the blue coats fast asleep! What could they do but show the "white

feather" to the "ragged Rebels, with their tan-bark coats and three-dollar shot-guns," as they, the Yankees, were facetiously pleased to style them. The loss on the Southern side was very small, although several of the Ninth Michigan were shot asleep. Five or six negroes were killed. We will always remember a remark made by a lady acquaintance, in whose company we visited the battle-ground that same afternoon. When she saw the dead negroes lying scattered around she said: "There, now, negroes, if you had staid at home with your masters, where you belonged, you might be living now."

The only especial loss on the Southern side was at the court-house, which was the only place that the cowards made any effort to protect themselves, as they fired from behind the brick walls, through the windows, at the raiders, and never surrendered until the lower part of the court-house was set on fire, they, thinking that the day of their doom had come too soon, waved a white flag and surrendered too. In the meantime a detachment of rebels

had gone to the depot and set it on fire, and burned up all the Yankee commissaries which were stored away there. From the burning depot the St. Charles Hotel caught fire, and, if we remember correctly, everything belonging to the proprietor was consumed. It was kept by Mr. Charles Watts, who was a clever man and a staunch Rebel, and was quite a loss to him.

There were a good many Yankees, who were either sleeping or escaped from their commands, took refuge in houses all over town; and it was dangerous for a citizen to show himself on the street, for they would bang away at them as soon as they came in range. There was one citizen, Mr. Nesbitt, an old gentleman, killed on the square, and one or two others badly wounded in the outskirts of the town—done in wanton malice, for which there could possibly be no excuse.

The Yankee force at Murfreesboro consisted of the Ninth Michigan and First Minnesota regiments, and Hewitt's Kentucky battery. The officers of the two regiments had bitterly quarreled, and were

not camping together at the time of the raid, which made them the easy prey of the Confederates. As they were separated, they consequently did less towards protecting themselves, when retribution came in the shape of the enraged Rebels. Some of the Yankees had shown a great deal of tyranny in their authority over the citizens, for which they were paid back with interest.

By one o'clock the whole Yankee force, including everything, First Minnesota and all, had surrendered to their inferiors in numbers by several hundred. Forrest had played his game with splendid tact, and borne flying colors from the field, for which we shall honor him to the day of his death. Forrest had only six hundred men in all, and about three hundred engaged in the battle, while the other three hundred were scattered around to protect the flanks. Captain Fred. James, a gallant Tennessean, led General Forrest into the First Minnesota camp about a mile below town on the Nashville Pike. General Forrest maneuvered splendidly. He ar-

ranged about a half-dozen regimental flags at intervals through the woods, which deceived the Yankees and made them believe that there were so many more Rebels than there really were. So this three hundred men captured five or six times their own number, and gained a splendid victory.

CHAPTER XI.

BRAVERY OF COL. LANTON AND HIS GALLANT
GEORGIANS.

THERE is one gray-haired, distinguished cavalry officer, who now resides in Macon, Ga., that bore a conspicuous part in that brilliant raid on Murfreesboro on the 13th July, 1862.

The Lantons are one of the oldest and most aristocratic families in Georgia, and the gallant part sustained by the Rebel Colonel on that memorable occasion added one more laurel to the wreath of brilliant deeds which had already encircled the brow of his proud native State.

The Second Georgia Cavalry, armed with only shot-guns, at noon on the 12th, while encamped six or eight miles from McMinnville, received orders to select three hundred picked men, and leave the balance of the command under the gallant Major Whaley.

With these three hundred men Col. Lanton joined Col. Wharton, of the Texas Rangers, with almost an equal number of men and about seventy-five men of a Kentucky battalion, and a part of the First Georgia Regiment, comprising in all less than eight hundred men. At one o'clock they were en route for some unknown point, the men fresh and eager for the sport. At a village about twenty miles from Murfreesboro they dismounted to refresh themselves.

General Forrest called up the commanding officers and informed them that the 13th of July was his birthday, and he wanted to celebrate it by the capture of Murfreesboro, which he represented to be garrisoned by about three hundred men.

That night at three o'clock the command reached a point about four miles from Murfreesboro. Here they made a halt, to enable a small advance guard to go forward and capture the pickets. Col. Wharton stretched himself at full length on the ground and snatched a few moments of rest, while Col. Lanton retired a few

steps into the thick forest and communed with nature's God.

Bang! went the guns at the picket post, and "Mount! forward!" came in impetuous tones from Forrest to the eager, panting Rebels: As before described, Wharton dashed in the Ninth Michigan camp, while Lanton went forward to that most dangerous spot of all, the court-house, and lost many of his bravest and best men, where the cowards fired from behind the court-house walls; and when Lanton rode into the street the entire provost guards fired at him, but amid that storm of bullets the grand, old soldier came out unharmed. As before stated, they never surrendered until the court-house was set on fire.

Lanton next went to the Minnesota camp, supported by Hewitt's Kentucky battery of four guns. Forrest ordered them to stand until he could attack in the rear. Thus for two hours did Lanton hold his men in line while the artillery were playing on them. Despairing of his General's attack in the rear, Lanton ordered his Adjutant Major, R. F. Lanton,

to charge the enemy, which was no sooner said than the men pressed forward with cheers and put them to flight, driving them back to their old position.

Soon after Forrest came up and ordered our troops back into town, when Col. Lanton proposed to him to see how a demand for surrender would be received.

Col. Lanton drew up a demand for surrender in Col. Ready's office. In it was stated that the Yankees must be aware of the overpowering forces under command of Forrest, and they (the Rebels) wished to prevent an unnecessary shedding of blood. Vanberger, Lanton's courier, soon was on his way to Parkhurst's camp, and less than forty-five minutes had elapsed when an unconditional surrender came from the camp.

As before stated the two commands were camping some distance apart, and Lanton drew up his men in as formidable manner as possible and sent the white flag into the Minnesota camp.

While the messenger was gone, Col. Lanton again retired and asked the bless-

ing of God on his command, and when the second surrender came the "boys in gray" made the welkin ring with shouts of triumph.

CHAPTER XII.

PRIVATE CITIZENS HELD AS HOSTAGES FOR SOME OF THE MISSING YANKEES—THE PRISONERS IN LINE OF MARCH FOR M'MINNVILLE—THE SURRENDER OF GENERAL TOM CRITTENDEN, OF THE FEDERAL ARMY, TO MRS. HAGAN—HOW AND WHERE CAPTAIN ROUNDS WAS TAKEN, WITH GENERAL INCIDENTS OF CAPTURE.

THE court-house or the jail was full of private citizens who had been arrested and dragged from their homes in consequence of some of the "blue-birds" mysteriously disappearing and their lords and masters ignorant of their whereabouts. They were released and went on their way rejoicing at their lucky escape.

We will relate a little incident, at the suggestion of an acquaintance, in regard to the citizen prisoners. It was said that

among the incarcerated citizens, there was one, a worthy old Baptist preacher, intensely pious, and with great faith in prayer. So this worthy said to his fellow-prisoners, who felt quite despondent and gloomy over their present situation: "Friends, we will try the efficacy of prayer;" and kneeling in their midst he prayed to be delivered from the hands of the Philistines, and continued to pray until he heard the tramp of Forrest's cavalry, and then he jumped up and shouted.

The crowning incident of cowardice was the surrender of General Tom Crittenden to Mrs. Hagan, who handed him over to the Rebels.

Mrs. Hagan, who was a noted Rebel, and the wife of a Southern soldier, kept a boarding-house at the old "Spence House," on the square, which was usually filled with Yankee officers. This General Crittenden had only arrived a day or two before the raid. He had come to Murfreesboro for the purpose of assuming command of the force stationed there, but had not yet gone out to camp. He

had heard of the intense Southernism of the citizens, so he assumed quite a pompous air, and was heard to make the remark that the "citizens here had been allowed too many liberties; they had not been ruled half tight enough; that we were not worthy the air we breathed; that *bread* and *water* would be too good for us, and that *he*, General Crittenden, would show us what a tight rein he would draw over us," etc.; but it is said that "the ways of men and mice gang aft a-glee."

When General Crittenden heard the melee, the hubbub, the uproar on the square, his excited imagination magnified the small handful of raiders into tens of thousands of avenging foes, and his terror knew no bounds.

"But hark! that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before;
Arm! arm! it is—it is the cannon's opening roar!"

Mrs. Hagan was startled to hear a "tapping, tapping, at her door," and a voice beseeching in the most piteous accents ever heard or imagined, saying: "Let me

in! It is I, General Crittenden; save me, madam, from the fury of these Rebels."

"And then there was mounting in hot haste the steed,
The mustering squadron, the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal afar,
And near the beat of the alarming drum,
Roused up the soldier, ere the morning star;
While thronged the Yankees, with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips—the Rebels!
They come! They come!"

And standing there in the uncertain light of the morning was a general of the United States army, knocking and begging at a woman's door for protection, which was a sample of the Union defender's bravery. Mrs. Hagan, delighted to her heart's core with the advent of the Rebels, preached the General a sermon, and told him that the "foe" was coming from the East, from the West, from the North, from the South, in great gray clouds, until the scared General cried out frantically; "Surrender me, madam! Save my life! Wave your handkerchief!" And Mrs. Hagan received General Crittenden's sword, and waved her handkerchief, and he was de-

livered over to the Rebels. Thus it belongs to a woman the honor (only we can not see where the honor comes in) of having received the surrender of a general of the United States army.

Well, as we have said, the whole force were prisoners in Forrest's hands. It was a splendid sight, we assure you—that long line of elegantly dressed and equipped Yankee officers and soldiers, mortified by defeat and covered with humiliation, riding so submissively along, attended by the dusty Confederates, up Main Street, *en route* for McMinnville to be paroled and sent back. Oh, they felt the sting, we assure you, and will feel it now, if their eyes should ever light on these pages.

Nearly twelve long years have come and gone since that summer afternoon, when we made merry at the expense of the captured Yankees, and *to-day* we feel as much enthusiasm at the recollection as we did in the reality.

Who can give a war-whoop like the Texas Rangers, with their broad Mexican hats and clanking spurs, that jingled at

every step. It made the Yankees dream of Pandemonium itself, and struck terror to their hearts; for they fancied the "Rangers" were demons in soldiers' uniforms, and hardly expected to escape with their lives when once in their hands.

Again, may God bless Forrest and the gallant heroes who relieved us from oppression, for a few days, at least, in July of the good year 1862. All honor to the heroes of the old Thirteenth! We must relate a little incident that occurred on the same afternoon.

A Texas Ranger had captured and arrayed himself in a fancy black velvet jacket, gaily embroidered with silver thread, and said to have been the property of General Crittenden, the one who surrendered to Mrs. Hagan. He rode by us on Main street, in front of Colonel Ready's residence, holding in his right hand a magnificent flag of "stars and stripes." We, the young ladies, cried out to him, "Trail it in the dust! Parkhurst trailed ours!" And the Ranger bent down and swept the emblem of the impe-

rial government at Washington in the dust of the streets, which was many inches thick, until it bore but a faint resemblance to the gay banner that had waved at the head of some thieving Yankee regiment. That was glory enough for us. We had bided our time and had our revenge at last:—

“For there never yet was human power,
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search, the vigil long,
Of him who treasured up a wrong.”

It will be necessary to explain our meaning. Some weeks previous to this the gallant Lieutenant Colonel Parkhurst, of Ninth Michigan fame (?), had, with a few picked followers, (or, it may be, the whole Yankee regiment,) gone on a marauding expedition in the direction of Fosterville; had captured two or three decrepid old negroes, some gray-haired citizens, and a small Confederate flag, probably the plaything of some child. Well, this gallant son of Mars—this brave defender of a nation’s insulted standard—this son of darkness actually

tied this same Confederate flag around his waist with a cord and dragged it through the streets of Murfreesboro in the summer of 1862. Had he won it on a battle-field from a defeated enemy, he might have with more propriety thus shown his contempt for those whom he affected to despise; but when we remember he became possessed of it in an old, dismantled *corn crib*, we confess we fail to see the glory of it.

Facts are stubborn things, and speak for themselves. Little did Colonel Parkhurst think that *his* flag was to be trailed in the streets of Murfreesboro, the scene of his former triumphs, and that *his* was to be a defeat more ignominious than any that had ever disgraced an army before.

Colonel Parkhurst, wherever you are to-day, have you any curiosity to know who stole your horse, that handsome animal, so superbly caparisoned, where it stood, tied to a tree, at the hour of one, on the night previous to your capture, in front of a house where you held court several evenings of each week of your

stay in Murfreesboro? That horse bore a gallant rider through your lines, and one more soldier enlisted under the banner that waved over Dixie.

And Captain Rounds, our provost marshal! If you could only have seen him with his airs and graces so gaily riding up and down the streets on Mr. Menefee's fine gray horse, which he was so kind as to relieve him of when he first came to Murfreesboro, (the captain being something of a connoisseur in horse-flesh) and for which theft or appropriation Mr. Menefee has not yet found it in his heart to forgive him! With what an air he used to issue his orders to the citizens! The Czar of Russia could not have spoken with greater pomposity than did Captain Rounds to the citizens. In thee was the old adage verified, that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Would *you* like for your Northern friends to know how and where you were captured on the thirteenth of July, 1862? Tradition hath it thus—softly, softly—that, coatless and shoeless, when the thunder of

Forrest's guns reached your ears, you crouched, shivering and struck dumb with fear, on the *floor, under the bed*, in the house of a citizen! When the Rebel soldiers dragged you forth perforce, shouting and laughing all the while, from under the bed, you cowered in abject terror and begged for mercy. If we remember correctly, they gave you no time to get your hat, and so the haughty monarch, Captain Rounds, rode out Main Street, chapeaules, until a citizen, who pitied him because he looked so white and sick and scared, went into the street and gave him a new straw hat, and the captain remembering his manners thanked the citizen, and the citizen, not forgetting the cursing he had gotten from Captain Rounds the day before (Saturday) jerked out, shortly, "no thanks, sir."

Verily the "mill of the gods grinds slowly, but it grinds surely." Tell it to your Northern friends to-day, if you consider it a feather in your cap.

We had not intended to be so explicit; but old-time memories possess us, and

when once commenced we know not where to stop. The stately step of the historian has passed over in silence these minor details, these lights and shades so essential in coloring a picture, and treated only of the great events and battles of the war, leaving to a less worthy pen to record the minutiae.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ENTRANCE OF NELSON'S DIVISION INTO MURFREESBORO—THE BURNING OF COLONEL ROBERT JETTON'S RESIDENCE ON THE FOLLOWING THURSDAY AFTER THE RAID—THE FALLING BACK OF BUELL—THE OCCUPATION OF MURFREESBORO BY BRAGG'S ARMY IN THE FALL OF 1862.

OUR deliverance from oppression was of brief duration. On the following Thursday Nelson's division of Buell's army entered and occupied the town of Murfreesboro for a few days. It is said that in the grave the remembrance of the bitterest wrongs are buried, and the most vindictive cease to thirst for vengeance. Yet General Nelson, in the national uniform of blue, was the incarnation of all that was coarse and cruel and brutal in human nature; and it is to be hoped that "after life's

fitful fever, he sleeps well." A pistol shot from the hands of the Federal General Jeff Davis, at the Galt House in Louisville, finally ended his career.

The night that Nelson's men came in town, on some pretext, we know not what, there went out from town a body of cavalry to the residence of Colonel Robert Jetton, a wealthy and influential citizen near town, and wantonly set fire to and destroyed his entire household possessions, containing the old family portraits and the accumulated relics of years. We gazed in terror at the flames which lighted up the whole surrounding country, and thought bitterly our time might be next. They fired through the windows at the inoffensive inmates, and Colonel Jetton crawled away in the darkness through the damp weeds and grass, and escaped through the Yankee lines. Colonel Jetton had several thousand dollars in money in his house, and it is supposed that they got it, and after helping themselves to whatever struck their fancy, they left it to its fate.

Such are the vicissitudes of war. They were enraged at the capture of their soldiers by Forrest, and sought their revenge in that way, approved and sanctioned by those in authority; for we never heard of any of them being arrested for it, or being punished in any way on that account.

The Yankees were falling back, and by the next Sunday not a blue coat was to be seen. There were several Texas Rangers and a few Georgians wounded and left in the hands of the citizens; and every citizen who did not get a wounded soldier (Southern) to pet and make much of, felt slighted. For several weeks Murfreesboro might have, with propriety, been likened to one vast picnic; for the ladies, young ones and old ones, went from house to house with their offerings of every imaginable delicacy to tempt the palate of the wounded Confederates. Young ladies brought new linen handkerchiefs, with the Confederate flag embroidered in the corner, and purchased perhaps with their only half-a-dollar in greenback; for that currency was a scarce commodity with the

citizens in those days ; so was the "purple and fine linen," for which all true Southerners had not ceased to yearn.

There was a Texas Ranger who was wounded in the charge on the court-house, and who lingered, and died, and was buried in the city cemetery, just one week to the day Forrest captured Murfreesboro. He had been brought from Colonel Arnold's residence, about a mile from town, to the house of Mr. Reuben Bolles, where he received every kind attention that sympathizing friends could bestow. He suffered intensely all the week, which he bore patiently and with fortitude, and we judged from the random words he spoke in his delirium, that he was a Christian, and, as we inferred from some of his possessions, holding to the Catholic faith. All that sad afternoon, when he lay dying, he murmured the words, "Sweet Jesus! Sweet Jesus! receive my soul!" and then his mind would wander slightly, and he turned his head on the pillow to the young lady who sat by his bedside, and asked her if she "was not going with him," and

said it was "getting dark." Yes, it *was* getting dark to the wounded ranger, for the film of death was gathering over his eyes. One last ray of the setting sun fell across the couch and lighted up the countenance of the dying ranger—one last, long grasp and the soul of Thomas Monks stood in the presence of its God.

Although so many hundreds of miles from his "Lone Star State," which he loved so dearly, many, many eyes dropped tears above the corpse of the dead hero.

The next day, which was the Sabbath, his funeral was preached in the Methodist Church, by the Rev. William Eagleton, whose soul is in heaven to-day; and the ranger was tenderly laid away to that sleep which knows no waking in this world. His grave was literally covered with flowers. It was all we had to offer. Why should we not honor his memory when this man had given all that he had—his life—for us? We all remember what a strange feeling stole over us as we sat that morning in the Methodist Church. An unnatural stillness brooded in the air,

which was attributable to the fact that not a Yankee remained in Murfreesboro. The very atmosphere seemed lighter and the skies brighter after they had left, and we hailed our deliverance with delight.

Not long afterward Bragg's army entered Murfreesboro, amid the welcoming cheers of her citizens, who greeted the gray coats once more with ardor.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MERRY FALL OF 1862, WITH A DESCRIPTION OF SOME OF THE FESTIVITIES—PRESIDENT DAVIS AND JO. JOHNSON VISIT MURFREESBORO—THE MARRIAGE OF GENERAL JOHN H. MORGAN.

THAT was a merry fall of 1862. We enjoyed ourselves sure, at least some of us. Through the dreamy autumn afternoons, we drove or rode or walked with our gay cavaliers in gray, and whiled away the long, bright hours with song and merriment, caring only for the present—and, at night, assembled at some place of festivity, “tripped the light fantastic toe” into the “wee sma’ hours ayant the twal.”

How the young ladies rummaged the dry goods stores for odd remnants of lace, or rose-colored or blue ribbon, and bought at fabulous Confederate prices ancient pieces of stiff, wiry muslin, and endeav-

ored to drape them into graceful folds to please the fastidious taste of their elegant cavaliers! and how fortunate do we remember to have esteemed ourselves in finding several yards of pink crape which suited admirably to trim a party dress!

These details no doubt seem trite to the reader, and unworthy to occupy space in a book; yet, nevertheless, they possessed an intense interest for us then; and we never commenced to write a plain, matter-of-fact history, but to gather up and weave into book-form the odds and ends as they come into our mind.

In thinking of all those past scenes, we have laid down our pen, on this wet, dreary day, and have gazed at that naked expanse of desolate grounds which surround Murfreesboro, until the tears we can not keep back force themselves to our eyes. We have looked at that cloud of smoke which rises from some hut, near Nelson's old fortifications, until the sight wearies us, while dreaming over the past.

How trivial may be the chain that links us to the past, in which we live over again and again the scenes which possessed such an intense interest for us in years ago. We think but little of the present, and yet, after it has passed away, we find ourselves dreaming over it, and wishing—how vainly—it might return.

President Davis, in company with Gen. Joseph E. Johnson, reviewed the troops of General Bragg's army at Murfreesboro during the fall of 1862. Everybody turned out on the gala day, and everywhere you met bright, smiling faces on their way to the parade ground; and everybody was equally anxious to gain a glimpse of the hero of so many battles in Virginia, General Jo. Johnson, as also they felt a great desire to see the President of the Confederacy. All the while the bands were discoursing gay, inspiring music, with colors flying at the heads of their respective regiments. Occasionally we got a glimpse of the President and General Johnson as they rode up and down the line with their long hair floating on the

wind. It was a superb sight. Every regiment in holiday attire, keeping step to the martial music while passing in review before the distinguished gentlemen.

We think it was that day General John H. Morgan received his commission as brigadier, and the next day, which was Sunday, in the afternoon, General Morgan was married to Miss Mattie Ready, who had been one of the reigning belles in the days when Washington society was something worth cultivating. Miss Ready was magnificently handsome, and was well mated to the General, who had for a long time been the idol of the Southern people.

There was a brilliant assemblage of guests, and Madame Grundy descanted largely on the handsome appearance of the groom and the queenly elegance of the bride who had borne off the coveted prize from many rivals throughout the South; for General Morgan was widely known and universally popular, as well he might be.

A shadow darkened the threshold of many a Southern home when the sad news

was transmitted across the wires that Morgan, whom the Southern people adored, was dead—not killed in fair, open fight, but murdered, wantonly and cruelly—for his brave life was worth every soul in the Yankee army.

In two more days after his marriage he struck out for Hartsville, and won a brilliant victory there, capturing over two thousand Yankee soldiers, whom he brought to Murfreesboro as prisoners. We remember walking through the square on that same afternoon they were brought in, and seeing the court-house yard full of blue-coated soldiers brought there by General Morgan and his men.

As much as the Federal soldiers hated General Morgan, he always treated his prisoners courteously, which is proof sufficient of the native kindness of heart which characterized the man. Yet the Yankee press took especial pains to represent this man as coarse and cruel and brutal, and as exceedingly tyrannical to his prisoners. There surely was never a greater mistake.

We remember a little circumstance which happened in regard to these prisoners, and we write it just as it was repeated to us.

A Confederate cavalryman, who hated intensely the Northern soldiers, and possibly had every right to do so, as everything his father possessed in the world had been taken from him and appropriated by the government for its own use. This Southern soldier spoke very harshly to the prisoners, and remarked in General Morgan's presence that anything was good enough for a Yankee prisoner. General Morgan overheard the soldier, and rebuked him severely, telling him that no one who was brave would insult a prisoner; that in case this should happen again, he would punish him severely, which abashed the Southern cavalryman very much, and rendered him more careful next time of what he said.

That last grand ball at the court-house on Christmas eve of 1862, given by the First Louisiana and Sixth Kentucky regiments, when—

“There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Murfreesboro’s capital had gathered there
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o’er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look’d love to eyes which spake again.”

How many of us remember it all with pleasurable feelings. The decorations of the hall were magnificent, and constructed with much taste and ingenuity. And if “bright lamps” did not shine over “fair women and brave men,” at least many *candles* did—behind each one a bayonet, which brightly reflected the light on the festive scene. That pyramidal chandelier of bayonets and candles was considered a *chef-d’œuvre* of elegance and ingenuity by those who constructed it.

There were trees of evergreen with colored lanterns in them in the corners of the hall, and jars of flowers, contributed by the Murfreesboro ladies, on the window-sills. There were two “B’s” entwined in evergreen, on one side of the hall, representing Bragg and Breckenridge, while just below it hung a magnifi-

cent regimental flag, and also, in different parts of the hall, a good many splendid trophies from the different battle-fields—Yankee flags, captured by General John Morgan. And all this time, while we are admiring the *tout ensemble*, the distinguished company is beginning to assemble; and the polished manners of the Confederate officers present might well have belonged to some foreign court. Then there came the crash of music, and the gay revelers sped onward in the giddy dance to the intoxicating, entrancing music, the stately cotillion, the voluptuous waltz.

There was a goodly array of splendid names present. Bragg, with his keen, piercing eyes, and the stately Breckenridge, Preston Smith, and a host of other brilliant names. General Polk lent his aristocratic presence to the occasion, and many others whose reputation for valor was widely known throughout the South. The festivities were prolonged far into the night, and when we left the heated ball-room and inhaled delicious draughts of

pure, fresh air, the following lines rose to our lips :—

“The masque is over, the dance is done,
The music, the song, the flirting, the fun,
And, coming home in the morning gray,
One yawns out sleepily, ‘did it pay?’”

Yes, it “did pay;” and we would like to live it all over again; or, rather, would like to meet our old friends of that time, and talk over with them those gay scenes again.

There is one other name which deserves to be enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen, who was present at this ball we are writing of, and who, too, lies in his dreamless bed. Tennessee had no truer, braver soldier than John Douglas, of Sumner county, and Adjutant of the Eighteenth Tennessee regiment. We knew him well—and he, too, is dead, as, indeed, are many others of our best friends and those we esteemed most at that time, leaving only the memory of their virtues to console us.

Although the laugh, the jest, and the

dance went on far into the night, it was soon to be turned into sorrow.

“Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in beauty’s circle proudly gay.
The midnight brought the signal sound of strife—
The morn, the marshaling in arms—the day,
Battle’s magnificent, stern array.”

Those two powerful armies, Bragg and Rosencranz, were preparing to close in a death struggle, and establish the supremacy of one or the other in Middle Tennessee. Soon was to be heard the long, dull thunder of cannon, and charge of cavalry; and the cry of Bragg’s army was Nashville! Nashville!

CHAPTER XV.

THE BATTLE OF STONE'S RIVER—THE REPULSE
OF BRECKENRIDGE AND EVACUATION BY
BRAGG OF MURFREESBORO.

, 'TIME passes! The dumb, bitter, snowbound and sullen
December is come,
And its snows have been bathed in the blood of the brave,
And many a young heart has glutted the grave;
On Stone's River yet, the wild bramble is gory,
And those bleak heights, henceforth, shall be famous in
story."

"Stone's River!" What a host of memories comes back with the name! How brave the Tennesseans fought on the thresholds of their own homes! With what stubborn courage they contested every inch of ground, pouring their heart's blood in an unequal contest with the vile scum of the North! How elated we were on Wednesday, the 31st of December, thinking that Bragg would dislodge Rosencranz and drive him back to

Nashville, and the Southern army would hold Murfreesboro at all hazards.

Poor Fred James! Let us drop a tear to his memory. He was killed on the threshold of his own home, almost at his own door, fighting *on his own ground* for the home of his childhood.

There was a lull on Thursday, and on Friday afternoon General Breckenridge attacked and met with a severe repulse, leaving many dead and wounded on the ground; yet, nevertheless, never had men fought with more determined courage; but the Yankees had thrice their numbers, as, in fact, they always did whenever they won a victory. We challenge the world to show where they ever held their ground against anything like equal numbers of Confederates! What had they, the paid hirelings of the North, to fight for save their bread and meat? What cared they for the emblem of the United States government, save as a striped rag, with stars painted on a blue field? It was that much to them and it was no more.

“A primrose by the river’s brim,
A yellow primrose it was to them,
And it was nothing more.”

They, the common soldiery, knew they were clothed and fed at the expense of the Yankee government, and paid a certain amount of wages to march under the “star-spangled banner.” They felt no enthusiasm at anything save in the prospect of plunder, which suited them well. Besides, the majority of them were *servants* at home, and could get as high wages in the army as they could command at home, and, besides, they wanted to “knock around” and see “something of the world,” as we heard some of them express themselves, prefacing an apology for being caught in “bad company.”

Well, many of them did see “something of the world,” but it was a contracted vision some of them sought when they found rest in the tomb.

But the most laughable thing, par excellence, was to hear those great, square-built, broad-faced, flat-footed foreigners, who could scarcely speak a word of

English correctly, with their stereotyped harrangue all about "dying for the old Union," and "fighting for the old flag," which seemed to us to be the "one step from the sublime to the ridiculous."

But to return to the battle.

It seems but yesterday since we laid our hands on the cold, dead face of General Rains, who was shot through the heart, killed instantly, on Wednesday, the 31st of December. It seems but yesterday since the screams of his sister, who refused to be comforted, came through the air on that chill, bleak, winter day, in accents of piercing sorrow! Ah, what must have been the feelings of the lovely young wife, who, environed by Yankees in the city of Nashville, was unable to come to him! It all comes back to us now with ten-fold force.

The sum and substance of the battle was, that Bragg whipped Rosencranz on Wednesday, and Breckenridge attacked and was repulsed on Friday, which elated the other side considerably, and, as they were constantly receiving reinforcements

from Nashville, a rumor spread like wild-fire late Saturday, succeeding the battle, that Bragg was going to evacuate, which the citizens were loth to believe, but which, for all that, was an unwelcome truth.

An amusing little incident happened near us during the battle. There were a good many Yankee prisoners brought in town during the fight, and as a squad of them were returning, under guard, from the Confederate *commissaire* head-quarters, where they had received their scant supply of Confederate rations, one of the Yankee prisoners held his up, and said derisively, "Here's your Confederacy rations!" and an old gentleman who was near him, and heard the remark, answered back, "and there goes the *negro stealers!*" which put a quietus on that soldier's remarks, and made him feel "small by degrees," and "beautifully less"—at least we imagine so

The retreat! Who of us that were here does not remember it, on that memorable 3d of January, 1863? It was the

grandest, saddest sight we ever saw. For days and days the men had fought around Murfreesboro, and poured out their heart's blood on the stiff-frozen ground, beneath the chill December sky, with a courage and devotion which forever endears them to our memory—and now they were leaving us!

In the gathering gloom of the evening, as the wet, dreary Saturday drew to a close, commenced that heavy tramp, tramp, tramp, which told us that Bragg's army of heroes, who had been baptized in blood, and covered all over with glory, were passing away in the silence and gloom and darkness of the night—ah! who knew whither? or where?

No other sound broke the stillness—only the ceaseless foot-steps of the retreating heroes, that followed each other in rapid succession, disturbed the breathless silence—not a word was spoken.

The author of these lines saw amid the dreary, falling rain, the dim out-lines of a gallant army that was passing away! and leaving their homes to the mercy of a

blood-thirsty enemy—and dropped bitter, burning tears. It was with sad hearts we bade our friends a long farewell, and wished them “God speed,” for many of them we never saw again.

The trains of cars were heavily laden, yet no shrill whistle rang out sharply on the night air to discover to the blue folks, almost within a stone’s throw of Murfreesboro, what the Rebels were doing. Thus they passed away without the Yankees having a suspicion of their falling back.

The cry of the Army of Middle Tennessee had been, Nashville! Nashville! The men had been buoyed up with the hope of striking Rosencranz a great blow, and forcing him back from the Capital, and now that they were cruelly told they must fall back, is it any wonder that the news was inexpressibly disheartening?

And here let us pay a tribute to General J. B. Palmer, fearless and brave, a very king of battle, and many times wounded, and never so much at home as where the sabres clashed and the cannon thundered. Tennessee may well be proud of this gifted

warrior, and to-day he lives in his native town, loved and respected by all who know him, and a talented member of the bar.

If the retreat of the army was sad, yet there were some of us who packed up in the haste and excitement of the moment, resolved to get away from the Yankees, and enjoyed intensely the midnight ske-daddle, and were determined to laugh and make the most of the "situation," nevertheless, although that long walk to the depot was not very amusing, for a small fine rain was steadily falling, and great gusts of wind, ever and anon, madly blew our umbrella out of our hands. It was next to impossible to procure a conveyance, so unexpected had been the summons; but by dint of perseverance the desired haven—the depot—was at last reached, and we were put aboard the cars which were to take us "refugeeing" "away down South," we had no idea where. With several other belated ones, we had the pleasure (?) of riding in a baggage car, with two or three families, with servants and children scattered promiscu-

ously around it. Owing to the discomforts of our "situation," being cold and damp and rainy, a lady friend kept saying aloud; "If I had known this, I would have staid at home with the Yankees;" "I wish I had staid at home with the Yankees," which horrified some Confederate soldiers, who thought the lady was in earnest, and at once set her down as "Union," and looked at her suspiciously.

We are morally certain we had not the remotest idea of writing anything of this kind when we commenced to write, but everything comes back to us so vividly we can not help it

Old army friends of 1862! where are you all to-day? May health and happiness attend you wherever you are! How glad we would be to meet you once more, and live over again the "olden time!" Captains Semmes, and Moore, and McKendree, and the handsome Colonel Bowen, of the Fourth Florida, you were good friends in the winter of 1862! Where have the winds of fortune scattered you to-day? Have you forgotten your Mur-

freesboro friends, in all these years that have dropped down into eternity? Alas! Poor McKendree! On the plains of Georgia he gave his noble life for the honor of Kentucky. As for the others, they are scattered far and wide, yet their memories are none the less pleasant. Once more, may success attend you!

CHAPTER XVI.

IMPORTANT DESERTION OF A TELEGRAPH OPERATOR.

PERHAPS it is a fact not widely known—or, if known or thought of at the time, it has become buried under the rush of events that succeeded it—that the advance of Rosencranz upon Bragg in June, 1863, was occasioned, it is natural to presume, by the desertion from Chattanooga of one Mr. John McCauly, who is well-known to the old citizens of Murfreesboro. This McCauly, a West Virginian by birth, was an operator, in high favor in official quarters, and was well-informed as to the strength of Bragg's army, and had his office at Chattanooga. One day McCauly was missing, and the rumor went abroad that "McCauly had deserted," which gained no credence—for the man had

many friends—until he was heard of in Murfreesboro. Strange to say, he arrived in Murfreesboro one day, ostensibly *en route* for his home in West Virginia, and the next day Rosencranz put his army in motion for an advance.

The Yankees dislodged the Rebels at a picnic at "Hoover's Gap," and it was said at the time that they never stopped dancing until a half-dozen shells had exploded in their midst, right at their feet. Whether they *chasseed* their partners to their seats, in that dance, *al fresco*, this deponent knoweth not.

It was "fight" and "fall back" with the Rebels in Middle Tennessee, until it had become an old song. So, wherever they stopped, even for a day or two at a time, they usually issued invitations to the young ladies, and they met in some public place to dance; and perhaps on the morrow they would have a battle, and many of them would be dead, lying almost within a stone's throw of the scene of the previous evening's merriment, where they might almost hear the echo of the music they

had danced to, were their ears not dull for the time to all sounds earthly.

We have lost sight of the principal characters in this true record of past scenes and years, and recalled trifles and incidents interesting perhaps only to ourselves. When we next hear from them, the Army of Middle Tennessee had been forced back by overwhelming numbers beyond the Tennessee lines. The two armies had met in a great struggle on the plains of Chickamauga, which was verily a contest of giants. The spot was rich in Indian legends, and a wild, weird place, but it was the scene of a terrible battle.

“No sunbeam lit the desolated field
Of Chickamauga, and no kindly star
With pitying eye looked down upon the wreck
Which, battle’s waves receding, left behind.
There fathers strewed the turf, and brothers there
Locked arms in death—there blood-wet flags
Trailed over miles of slain; but black-browed night
Gloomed over all, and strange, sad silence reigned
Where late the strife had been, save only groans
Of men who strived with Death as they to-day
Had fought with bannered foes.”

Victor Hart was still on the “staff,” and had passed through many a fiery ordeal

since we last conversed with him. He had had several scratches, and felt the wind of many a bullet that almost grazed his cheek, and yet he laughed and fought all the same, as if nothing had ever happened to disturb his equanimity; his spirits never flagged, his supreme courage never failed him, and often he went into battle singing, "The girl I left behind me." His heart he had left in the Old Dominion. He was telling the truth when he affirmed to his sister that he was "falling in love." Major Hart was hopelessly and irretrievably in love, and the "girl he left behind him" in Virginia returned it with equal ardor—for who could resist his bright, fascinating manners and genial humor? It was not a "flirtation," but a *bona fide* love engagement, which was consummated at the close of the war, when Major Hart returned home with his hard-won laurels—a parole in his pocket, and divested of the time-honored gray uniform.

Young ladies of the South, answer me: It was pleasant, was it not, during the war where the Confederate armies were sta-

tioned? There was so much romance in the Southern army. In the rapid and ever-changing panorama of the war, one was constantly meeting and forming new acquaintances. The ceremonies of a formal introduction were frequently dispensed with, and the proprieties that "Madam Grundy" had previously required were passed over in neglect. The acquaintance of to-day became the fast friend of to-morrow, and the next day would probably be gone forever; yet around the acquaintance thus rapidly and unceremoniously formed perhaps there lingered an aroma with the spice of a romance in it.

How slight may be the trifles that recall some lost love of our youth, some scene in the happy years that have flown! It might be a bouquet of scentless, withered flowers, tied with a faded blue ribbon, yet it speaks to us in memories tender from the grave of some dear, dead friend. It might be the breath of a summer's night, that comes back heavily laden with the hours that have gone into eternity; or the odor of a sweet flower, and we will re-

member some gay gallant who placed it in our hair with tender words of love and passionate admiration, and bade us "think of him, and him only," in his absence, and *rehearsed* the same enchanting tableau for the benefit of the next pretty girl that the chances of war threw in his way. Who could blame them that they enjoyed themselves and made themselves happy and merry, for they knew not what the morrow might bring forth—who would be the next to fall.

Old soldiers of the South, you were right to laugh and dance in all those years that are gone! The present was yours to enjoy; the shadowy future you went forth to meet with a brave heart.

The true Southern soldier was equal to any emergency, and

"Threw himself, heart and soul, into all that allured
Or engaged his sensations; nor ever endured
To relinquish to failure whatever he began,
Or accept any rank save the foremost."

And sitting here to-night, and thinking of all the shifting scenes in the years that have come and gone, a voice from the

depths of our heart cries out; "O lost years, return! O happy days, come back!" And only the roar of the waters outside, where the rain is pouring in torrents, reply: Nevermore, nevermore!

Gilbert St. Maurice was serving with a general of considerable distinction, in Georgia, and that general had no fear of a living human being. He admired St. Maurice more than any one he ever knew. He was always intrusted with important orders, for he had the will and the courage to execute whatever commission was assigned to him. His cordial bearing and cheerful smiles made him a general favorite with his superior officers.

The army had fallen back, fighting all the way, from Chattanooga to Dalton, and as we heard a returned soldier express it, "men who had never prayed before in their lives, and were reckless and profane at home, prayed all the way from Chattanooga to Dalton," for the cannon roared all day long, and the muskets banged from morning till night, and no one of them felt any security for his life.

On one occasion, when a regiment of cavalry showed signs of fear and confusion, St. Maurice, who had just delivered a dispatch to one of the generals in a distant spot, and was returning like lightning across the field, darted to the head of the wavering column; seized the colors, rode rapidly up and down the line, rallied the men to the charge, dashed wildly forward, cheering all the time, and won the point for which they were contending. The commanding general publicly complimented him for this piece of bravery in the presence of the entire army.

The heart of Marion Hart thrilled with triumph when she read in the newspapers of her lover's gallantry. In her "hero-worship" she had invested him with a halo of romance, and regarded him as some enchanted knight of the olden days of chivalry, with plumed hat and golden spurs, hastening to battle. Yet the time was not far distant when we shall bid him a long farewell, never to hear his cheerful voice again, nevermore to feel the warm clasp of his hand, nor see the sweet smile

that always so kindly greeted us. The blue eyes were soon to be closed in death, and the cold hands folded over the stilled heart.

We have thought sometimes it was well for those who died in the flush of victory, nor ever endured the mortification and humiliation of those who lived to see the dream fade, and the war over—those who came home ragged and soiled, with no money in their pockets, and many of them no homes to come to, and beheld the desolation that the four years of the war had wrought; for time and things had changed, materially changed. Society was upheaved from its base. Those who were poor and obscure, had become rich, and rode in velvet-lined carriages, and spent gold freely. Those who were in affluence in the beginning of the war, and lived in luxuriously-furnished houses, with crowds of well-trained servants at their command, were now performing the coarsest kind of manual labor for their daily bread. Alas, a change had come to all! Bread, with but a small accompaniment of anything

better, had to be worked for, and the "purple and fine linen" cast aside with an humble acceptance of a less costly fabric. No more dreaming in indolent luxury, sleeping, dressing, eating and visiting at pleasure. A life of toil rose before the hitherto idle Southerner. A Yankee soldier once remarked to us, he reckoned "we Southerners would not be quite so 'stuck up,' when we had to cook and wash and iron, like their wives and daughters." Poor besotted bats that they were! They conceived the idea that mere manual labor was the cause of their inferiority. There were some among the Southerners who accepted the change in the best spirit they could assume, and bore bravely what they could not help. And then there were others who were ashamed, and hung their heads in silence, and had not the moral courage to face the issue.

We saw the son of a formerly wealthy and aristocratic family driving cattle. He turned his head and averted his face, and did not speak to us, although we knew him well. That was laughable. We saw

a staff officer—and, for that matter, a gallant one—clerking in the store of a Jew, and on a small salary too. For that we admired him. With the true courage of a noble soul, “whatsoever his hands found to do he did with his might,” falsifying the Yankee idea that a native-born Southerner was too proud to work.

Well, we beheld all this and much more after May, 1865, and marveled at the great changes that had taken place in our old homes, which, alas! were desolate indeed when we remember those who were never to come back. But, thank God, to-day “there is life in the old land” yet. The dormant powers of the Southern people have been fully developed, and keep pace with the master minds of the age.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOME-LIFE OF MARION HART.

MARION HART in her own home tried to fill the empty space in her life caused by the absence of her lover—a long, tedious absence, under which she sometimes well-nigh broke down. She made life endurable by devoting herself to the indigent. “The poor ye have always” seemed to be her sole care; and truly and faithfully did she obey the injunctions of her Divine Master, and into many desolate homes did she bring joy and sunshine, with bodily as well as mental comfort.

How much good one *might* do in this world, if one only would! There are hundreds of opportunities daily before our eyes, yet we close our hearts, and turn an indifferent ear to the appeals of suffering humanity, with only a passing exclamation of sympathy, which is forgotten almost as soon as spoken. Yet

we live in a civilized land, and call ourselves Christians. Christians indeed! It is a libel on the cause. That Christianity which only sentimentalizes over the degradation of fallen humanity in a fanciful way, without a tangible result in alleviating their sufferings, is but an indifferent thing, a farce, a superficial emotion, a mockery! There are thousands daily fainting under their heavy burdens, who only need a kind word, a strong hand, to help them through the slough of despondency. Yet we withhold the "kind word" within the circle of our happy homes, surrounded by thoughtful, loving care, and turn a deaf ear to the heart-sick and weary. In the calm consciousness of superior moral rectitude and power, we hesitate to contaminate ourselves by contact with the "fallen." The hardened criminal would perhaps like to return to the days of sweet peace and innocence, but where can there be found a helping hand? And shall we be held guiltless in the hour of final judgment? No! the very stones will cry out against us.

From a gay and brilliant belle, Marion Hart had changed into a thoughtful, loving woman, with her mind purified by sorrow—just as the finest gold is relieved of dross by passing through the fiery furnace. It was the depth, the intensity of this proud girl's love that caused her to humble herself in sight of her Maker and man. There was a sublimity in the heroism with which she sacrificed her former tastes and pursuits, and devoted herself to those who needed her help and appreciated her sympathy. There may have been a tinge of selfishness in the under-current of her motives, for she well knew it would exalt her in the estimation of him whose good opinion she cared for more than all the world beside; and love makes us all selfish to some extent. Never had the girl prayed as fervently as she did during those last dark days of the war. A shadow had fallen across her pathway, and the only comfort she had was in the brief snatches of sunshine that broke upon the gloom of her every-day life in the way of letters—great, thick, bulky letters, that

never failed to come—letters that lightened her footsteps, causing the pale, proud face to flush and the eyes to kindle into something like joy, and the voice to break into snatches of old-time melody. Those who were accustomed to seeing her daily moving about with noiseless steps and softened tones, would turn and look at her in astonishment, as she passed them with fleet footsteps on her self-imposed round of daily duties, and wonder at the subdued joy that glowed in her countenance and irradiated her whole face. At such times there was a dreamy, tender light in the deep, mournful eyes, that rendered her face inexpressibly beautiful. Such was the potent force for joy or sorrow that lay revealed in the closely-written lines.

Reader, you have seen persons clutch eagerly at letters, have you not? with flushed, kindling cheeks full of joy and expectation, and as often seen the cheek pale to sudden fear and bitter, unavailing tears force themselves from eyes, which but a few moments ago danced in mirth. Thus

quickly do joy and sorrow follow each other in rapid succession. Our cup of bliss seems full to overflowing, and just as it is being lifted to our lips, some rude hand jostles our elbow and it falls to the ground. Like the child that is captivated by the golden wings of some brilliant butterfly, and gleefully chases it through the sunshine, and just as it thinks it is secured, it darts away and soon is out of sight. So it is with life in its checkered scenes, with its hopes, loves, fears and sorrows, that come alike to all.

That sorrow is most sublime which shows itself not to the scoffers; that grief most majestic that shrinks from observation, and endeavors, under a smiling, composed exterior, to hide from the world the heart which no longer hopes—the heart from which the romance of youth is forever dead—where the flowers of hope lie withered and dry, and crumble beneath the touch.

Marion Hart was composed, was sublime in that sorrow which had learned to "suffer and be strong," that Longfellow

describes so exquisitely, until the long, dull thunder of the guns in Georgia told that the two opposing armies had met once more in mortal combat. Sherman had begun his famous "march to the sea," which Yankee *penny-a-liners* have celebrated in story and song, and the forces of Jo. Johnson were every day fighting and falling back. The fair plains of Georgia had become a scene of desolation and bloodshed and ruin, lit by blazing fires, with household goods and altars overthrown and destroyed.

What mattered that daily the best blood of the South ran in crimson torrents to stay the tide of invasion? What mattered the cries and prayers and groans that ascended to Heaven amid the dust and smoke and din of battle? that woman and children beheld their husbands and fathers stretched at full length, dead, before them, and cried for bread, and fled in terror before a triumphant, blood-thirsty foe? Of what avail? What had thy people done, O God, that this great trial had come upon them? Was the sin theirs, that they were

hunted down and driven by fire and sword from their own home into the fastnesses of the mountains by an insolent, victorious army? We know not, and may never know here ; but in the great unknown, unseen world to come, we shall know that, as well as many other things that seem inexplicable to us now. Was it that the Lord loved us so that he laid the hand of affliction so heavily upon the Southern people? Yet there were very many Christians throughout the South who shouldered their muskets and entered the ranks, and fought in what they considered a righteous cause while attempting to expell the invaders from Southern thresholds and to defend with their latest breath all they held most dear. Were they not right? We can not answer the question here ; but in the Hereafter, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, we shall know.

Time passes. St. Maurice, on the evening previous to the impending battle of which we write, had made all his arrangements for the future, in case he should be killed. He was orderly and

systematic in his habits even in the army. Old-time ways seemed to cling to him, and in the army, ever since he had been a soldier, he had practiced what his mother had inculcated in him from his early boyhood. He was not one whit less elegant, less fastidious, than in the days when with a few choice spirits, congenial companions, he had made the tour of the Old World, and supped in the great illuminated halls of titled foreigners, and drank the sparkling moselle in delicate, amber-colored glasses, where haughty, jeweled maidens smiled upon him, and thought the manners of the *distingue* young American "so charming," "so free from affectation."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DEATH OF LIEUT. ST. MAURICE.

THE forces of Jo. Johnson's army were steadily employed all day long in throwing up breast works for the impending battle. There was quite an active stir in camp, which showed that events of great importance were at hand. Couriers came and went from head-quarters in a sweeping gallop, and Confederate officials in high authority discussed eagerly and with anxious faces the present situation of affairs—and still the weary, worn soldiers spaded up the yellow clay, while nearly ready to faint from exhaustion.

To Marion Hart, who never for one moment was out of his thoughts, Lieutenant St. Maurice wrote a long letter—the last one ever penned by his hand, and in many places blistered with tears, almost rendering some words wholly illegible.

Those tears were no disgrace to the manhood of the proud, strong man, from the depths of whose heart they were wrung in the extremity of grief and deep sorrow.

Sitting under the shadow of a great tree, apart from the rest of the staff, who were discussing the probable issue of the impending battle, lounging and smoking around head-quarters, Lieutenant St. Maurice wrote the last lines that would ever reach the eyes of Marion Hart, and over which she was to weep the bitterest tears in all her after-life—the dreamy, aimless after-life—that was to come to her, when every vestige of happiness would be fled forever, and the present only haunted by the ghosts of memories that would stalk through the empty chambers of the heart, awakening echoes that could only sadden and bring no consolation. The letter ran thus :

HEAD-QUARTERS, . . . BRIGADE, . . . , GA.

My Darling Marion :—We are on the eve of another great battle, and I am writing to you for the last time. Do you understand that, my darling—for the last time? In the many battles I have been engaged, I have never felt as I

have to-day. There is an instinct—a something within me—that tells me that ere the sun of the coming morrow shall have set in blood and smoke, my soul will have passed into eternity; my spirit have gone before the Ruler who judges all things righteously. In this supreme moment my heart is with you, where it has always been since we parted in the gloaming, when I bade you a final adieu, under the old oak tree on the ledge of rocks at our favorite tryst. You are always present in my thoughts—your dear image never leaves my mind for an instant, whether on the frozen shores of the Potomac, on the long, hard, forced marches in the wet, dreary night, or on the flowery plains of Georgia, I have thought of you incessantly.

I have prayed many times that I might be permitted to live through the horrible scenes that I have witnessed—pass through all the bloodshed, tears, and death—and one day present myself before you, unexpected and unannounced; but God has willed it otherwise. To-morrow, before the sun shall have reached the zenith, I shall be gone.

Ah, my darling, do you know what it costs me to write these words? If I could only press my lips to yours once more—if I could only fold my arms around you, and feel your heart with its passionate throbs of love beating against my own—I would give worlds.

The miniature you had painted for me in Charleston, after you found that I had enlisted in the army, I have always worn next my heart; and many, many times, it has been under a perfect hail-storm of bullets. There is a defaced place on the case which encircles your dear face, a broken edge, done amid the lurid smoke at Chickamauga, when a bullet narrowly escaped reaching my heart, and tore the case of your picture; and when I came out from that battle unscathed, I could only press my lips to the inanimate glass that covered my darling's face and thank God. You were far from the field of danger in reality.

The dear little bible you gave me at parting has been my

nightly companion. From its well-worn pages I have tried to gain consolation and hope. If I have done wrong in anything, may God forgive me. I know that I have tried harder than I have ever done before to lead the life of a Christian, ever since I became a soldier. I have been assailed on all sides by temptation, and if I have failed in my duty, may I be forgiven; it was an error more of the head than of the heart.

My sash and sword I bequeath to you, and will give instructions to your brother Victor to send them to you, although he laughs at what he calls my "superstition;" yet I could see a gloomy light in his eyes when I told him that I felt certain I would be killed to-morrow; and I know he feels badly, too, for he has not looked at me since without that sad, wistful expression. I had not thought it would affect him so deeply, yet I ought to have known it, after all.

You will come to my grave sometimes, dear Love, when the war shall have ended, and peace restored to our long-suffering, hard-trying land. You will drop bitter, burning tears when the first snows of winter shall silently wrap your lover's grave in its shroud of white, and sadly think, "ah they are falling on *his* grave." And when the snows shall have melted away and the balmy breath of spring comes stealing over all our South land in its slumbrous beauty, and the crocuses and violets are lifting their frail heads above the yellow grasses, you will lay a chaplet of wild-flowers, culled by your own hands, and *wet* with your tears, above the sod that covers all that is left of me.

My poor father and mother—you will comfort them if you can. Tell them that with my latest breath I blessed them, and in the depths of humility I thank them for the holy love they bore me, and the kind affection by which I was always surrounded.

Your brother Victor has been more than a brother to me, the very best friend I ever had, and I have no words to express the affection I feel for him.

I feel assured of the deep, abiding love you have always borne for me. "Perfect love casteth out fear." I have never for an instant doubted you, and I know the anguish that will wring your heart when these lines reach your eyes. How often have I repeated to myself these words: "Tender and true," when thinking of you in all our happy past! How often I am with you in my dreams, and awake to the bitter reality of knowing that weary miles of space divide us! Yet I would not repine. May Heaven bless you to-night and sustain you!

Once more, my darling, farewell! a long farewell! The unseen Angel of Death is flapping his wings near me! I feel his ice-cold breath on my cheek, and hear the voice that says, "Thy career on earth is ended, O mortal! Come!" I go to join that band of pale sleepers. Farewell!

GILBERT ST. MAURICE.

Long did Lieutenant St. Maurice sit after his brother officers had retired to snatch a few moments of repose to be prepared for the morning strife, by his camp-fire, and gaze gloomily at the smouldering coals, reading his doom—death—in the heavy, black shadows cast by the dying, flickering firelight. The chance discharge of a gun; the neighing of horses that stood tethered to the boughs of trees around head-quarters; the stifled hum of the two hosts resting on their arms, only waiting for the morn to usher in Day with its splendid, golden banners, from the far

east, were the only sounds that broke the silence of the night. Still he sat and mused by the camp-fire's dying light, with his face buried in his hands, and reflected on the checkered scenes of the past few years. When a boy, and he had read of the great exploits of Wellington, Napoleon, and a host of other great warriors, their brilliant deeds thrilled him through and through, and it seemed strange now that *he* was a participant in events that were daily going to make history. Once he heard a sigh and a slight movement near him, and turning his head he saw by the fitful firelight the form of his beloved friend, Victor Hart, leaning on one elbow, and gazing steadily at him through the gloom, with an intensity of expression that betrayed the anxiety he felt on his account.

Major Hart had wrapped himself in his cavalry cape, and with his gray cap, which bore a single golden star, under his head for a pillow, was trying to get a few moments of rest before morning; yet the effort had been in vain. The prophetic

words of his friend St. Maurice haunted him so persistently that it drove all sleep from his eyes. "I shall be dead to-morrow noon," rang in his ears until the echo haunted him like an unwelcome ghost. At last he spoke :

"St. Maurice, you are not going to sit where you are all night, I hope. Are you not going to try to snatch a few hours of slumber, so as to feel fresh in the morning?"

"I do not know, Victor; I have scarcely thought about it. I suppose it will make but little difference to-morrow whether I rested or not."

"Gilbert, dear, true, tried friend, your words pierce me like an arrow! It would nearly kill me to lose you. I pray that your instincts may deceive you this once."

Major Hart had come and sat down by St. Maurice, and placed one strong arm on his shoulder.

"Ah, Victor, dear old fellow, you and I have lived and loved each other through many a changing scene.

And St. Maurice passed his hand over

the brown, disordered locks of his faithful friend with the very caressing tenderness of a woman. There was an unspoken blessing in the very accent with which he addressed him, an exquisite pathos in the voice, as if there, too, were unshed tears.

Major Hart replenished the dying camp-fire, and resolved to sit up the balance of the night with his friend, whose usual cheerfulness had ended in a gloomy despondency; and going back, in thought, to their proud native State, South Carolina, they recalled every familiar incident from their early boyhood up to the time when they had graduated together at Yale College, and from then to the stirring scenes of camp-life since May, 1861, when they first went to Virginia, up to the present time. His voice grew more and more indistinct, and his accents fainter and fainter. At last St. Maurice slept. Major Hart never changed his position, but supported the tired head on his faithful shoulder, and thought sadly of the morrow. He slept quietly for half an hour as peacefully as a child, and then his slumber was

broken by fitful starts, and at last he threw up his arm with an expression of acute pain, and opening his eyes wildly, exclaimed, "Great God! Victor, I dreamed I was shot through the heart!"

The instinct of Lieutenant St. Maurice had told him truly; yet his brother officers laughed at his fears the day before, and told him he was getting "superstitious," that "so much fighting from Chattanooga to Dalton and onward had unmanned him." They were wrong. It was not fear. Those who knew him best, also knew no human being was ever braver. It was the "shadows of the coming events." Men have often had premonitions of death on the eve of great battles.

Lieutenant St. Maurice had been in the thickest of the fight all the morning, as cool and self-possessed as if he had been on dress parade, and at one time he led a cavalry charge up the hill where the enemy was massed and doing great damage to the Confederate artillerymen, swept them from their position and scattered them in confusion amidst the wildest

cheering and yelling that ever rent the air. It was then that he lost his life—a life that all the blood in the Yankee army could not atone for.

After the battle, strong men wept when they beheld Lieutenant St. Maurice, stretched at full length on the ground, smiling and serene, even in death, which had not marred his imperial beauty. It was a spectacle that would have melted the stoutest heart to tears. The battle which had raged furiously at intervals all day, ceased with the setting sun. The night that followed was filled with strange sights and sounds. The groans of the wounded and dying; the occasional boom of a gun, sullen and threatening, which told that the enemy were still on the *qui vive*; the pallid moon, struggling through the masses of light clouds that ever and anon obscured her mournful radiance, were sad indeed.

Major Hart had also been where the bullets were thickest, but had come out untouched, unhurt. Was it Providence, reader, that amid all that hail-storm of

grape and canister, he should have escaped unhurt, while so many of his comrades lay dead and dying around him, or so frightfully torn by fragments of shell?

It was after nightfall when Victor Hart reached the body of his friend, and threw himself on the ground beside him, and wrapping his arms around him, wept like a broken-hearted child, and kissed many times with the very tenderness of a woman the still, cold face of him who had been for years his dearest friend, with a heart well nigh broken with sorrow. And the grim warriors, standing by, wept in sympathy.

A grave was hurriedly dug, and kindly hands enfolded him in the colors he loved so well, the Confederate flag, and for which he had given his brave young life, and tenderly laid him down to his dreamless slumber. And men stood with abated breath as the clods fell with a dull, heavy sound over the body of the young hero. The winds sighed mournfully through the pine tops, where the very stars seemed to look with solemn pity over the newly-

made grave. Major Hart knelt above the mound of clay, and offered up a prayer for the soul of his brother officer, whose instincts had told him so truly.

It was a weird, lugubrious scene, with the moon ever and anon engulfed in the dark clouds that rolled rapidly across the sky, now lighting up the powder-be-grimed faces of the weary soldiers with brilliant radiance — again drifting into shadow, amid the groans of the wounded, and the solemn voice of Victor Hart as he prayed for the soul of his dead friend. They placed a small board, with name and rank attached, and left him alone in the hot July night.

O summer moon and stars, who looked with such solemn pity above the noble dead; who saw another scene, days later, when the sound of a woman's wail came, borne on the stifling summer night, from far-off South Carolina! It was Rachel, weeping and refusing to be comforted.

Thus, O Grave, thou hast thy victory!
O Death, thou hast thy sting!

CHAPTER XIX.

COLONEL ST. MAURICE AND HIS WIFE.

WE will in mercy draw a vail over the anguish that filled the mother's heart, loving and true, and laid her, too, in the grave soon afterwards. She never rallied from the shock, and for days raved and tore her hair in the wildest delirium, and then her voice would sink to a tearful whisper, and she besought God in the most piteous accents to give her back her precious, only son, which was always succeeded by a copious flow of tears. The pride of her life was gone. And Gilbert St. Maurice slept on in his grave under the pine trees in far-off Georgia, all unconscious of the anguish that wrung two proud women's hearts. Rest in peace, O noble soul! Thine was a glorious career!

The heart of the proud old father, Col-

onel St. Maurice, was well-nigh broken, for he had loved his handsome only son with a love almost bordering on idolatry.

When Sherman's army reached the old St. Maurice plantation on which his father's fathers had lived before him, and made a bonfire of all his valuable, personal possessions, where the flames lighted up the very sky with a red glare, and the mad Yankee soldiery, intoxicated with joy, made the night hideous with their shouts of fiendish triumph and glee; when he saw his wife's handsome rose-wood piano, with glittering pearl keys, split from end to end, and all her elegant dinner service of exquisite tinted French china, with its golden monogram in the center of each piece, broken in ten thousand pieces by axes in the hands of Sherman's valiant warriors; and his gardens and store-houses robbed of all their precious treasures, and all the costly shrubbery and statuary hewn and cut down by those accustomed to swing the axe from childhood; when he saw the grave of his lost and cherished wife who was buried by the

side of the other St. Maurices, who had slept undisturbed for years in the old family cemetery, desecrated and trodden by the unhallowed feet of the Yankee cavalymen—yes, when he beheld all this and much more, the light of reason tottered on its throne, and then, in darkness, went out forever.

And when strangers wandered over the ruined grounds, amid rank luxuriance of roses and honeysuckle, and tangled, trailing vines, they would sometimes meet an old man with bowed head and unkempt beard, who roamed sadly and harmlessly over the place where he, Colonel St. Maurice, had once been the lordly owner and lived in such regal splendor, and now which only presented to the chance passer-by the ashes of desolation, with gorgeous reminders of its former prosperity and wealth.

To their honor be it said, that a few of the old servants clung to the unfortunate master who had been so kind to them and

considerate of their welfare, and gave him bread and kind words.

There was only one spot that had escaped the fire which consumed the premises. To the right of the main building stood a little office, which was almost covered and concealed by a wealth of climbing vines, full of starry, snowy blossoms. This spot had been the favorite resort of Gilbert St. Maurice in his happy past. It was luxuriously furnished, and contained his entire library. There were two sides of the room filled in with shelves of dark carved wood that rose to the ceiling, filled with the thoughts of distinguished personages of every age and clime. From the center of the ceiling depended a handsome lamp, with delicate porcelain globe, which had used to emit such a rich, mellow light over all the rare objects scattered around, where Gilbert St. Maurice dreamed his dreams in his younger, happier days. Over the mantle hung the portraits of his father and mother, drawn expressly for himself. These had been done by a master painter, and intended for this very

room. He might well have been proud of his mother. In her youth she had been a very queen of beauty; and here, in this portrait, she had been magnificently handsome in her trailing robes of black velvet, and rare old point lace; and around the shapely, white throat, a necklace of diamonds, which had been a wedding gift from her husband in their aristocratic days. The father, too, was stately and grand, and a kind sweet smile seemed to beam upon all who came near him.

In this office or library, which had not been burned, the rude soldiery laid violent hands on everything that chanced to come under their observation, and tore the handsomely-bound books, in their elegant morocco bindings, from the shelves and threw them through the windows to the ground, with their torn mutilated covers, in every direction. But the strangest thing of all—the soldiers never touched the portraits, nor the handsome leather-covered reading chair, which stood in the corner of the room undisturbed.

In this office the old man, Colonel St.

Maurice was frequently found, sitting in this same old chair, looking vacantly around. And when any one ventured to address him, or came near him, he would say to them in piteous accents :

“Tell my son Gilbert to come quickly ; I want him. Sherman’s soldiers are burning my house. Hark ! Don’t you hear them in there ?” pointing to the spot where the house stood. “Now they are splitting the furniture with axes ! My God, how terrible !”

Thus he would ramble on, his thoughts ever recurring to the burning house, and those terrible days of the scourge which swept like a plague through the doomed State of South Carolina. And truly, indeed, did this unfortunate place realize one’s idea of the “deserted homestead” —

“No hand above the window
Ties up the trailing vines,
And through the broken casement panes
The moon at midnight shines ;
And many a solemn shadow
Seems starting from out the gloom,
Like forms of the long departed ones
Peopling that dim old room.”

The very portraits, in their ancient grandeur, seemed to say, "I could a tale unfold." Could there be imagined anything more sad than that melancholy, bowed old man, dreamily wandering "o'er a land long deserted." "Waiting, only waiting," to be gathered into the fold of the good Shepherd?

One night there came a terrific storm, and the thunders roared and the lightnings flashed. The giant trees that had stood guard for so many centuries over the old homestead were torn up from their very roots, the rain came down in torrents, and great sheets of water gleamed through the black night when a brilliant flash of lightning revealed it to the eye. The poor, crazed old man, Colonel St. Maurice, had, with the instinct of self-preservation which is the first law of nature, sought and found shelter in the office from the rain while the storm was at its height. When morning dawned in the far east, the clouds and rain had passed away, and a glorious burst of sunshine lighted up the grounds and dismantled

trees and torn-down fences. During the night the office had been swept away by the fierce winds and rains, and now was found the body of Colonel St. Maurice, washed up against the broken-down fences—dead! The poor, care-worn face was black and bruised in many places, from being swept with so much force against the fences, and there was a meaningless stare in the vacant, watery eyes which were wide open, and the long, uncared-for hair tangled and muddy. He had seen the “end of all earthly things,” and one more “unfortunate” had gone to answer the roll-call in another world.

A rough coffin was furnished by the United States Government, and ruder Yankee hands dug a grave in the old cemetery, and laid him to rest. What a death and burial for a St. Maurice! That ancient, proud family, with its boasted, spotless escutcheon, and long line of splendid ancestry! Alas! that such should be the finale—that families should decay and the scum should come to the surface, as it has happened many times since the war.

CHAPTER XX.

IN WHICH MAJOR HART REPENTS OF HIS
UNIONISM — INCIDENTS AMONG THE
YANKEE SOLDIERS.

IN those last years of the war we think Major Hart had occasion to repent him of his Unionism. When Sherman's army which had nearly completed its "march to the sea" entered the State of South Carolina, different bodies of soldiers quartered themselves on his premises, unhandsomely appropriating whatever they saw fit, utterly regardless of prayers, and entreaties, and tears. We think if Major Hart, who had all his life been so arrogant and over-bearing to those upon whom he chose to regard with such lordly indifference as his inferiors and socially beneath him, could have recalled the past, he would have unhesitatingly cast his fortunes with the despised Confederacy, and possibly, if he could, have recalled the contumely which

he saw fit to heap on that body of people in those first years of the war. But it was too late. They, his Yankee friends, swarmed over his well-tilled fields like an army of locusts, literally devouring every green thing. They wanted to "test" the Major's "Unionism" they affirmed with a sly leer in the eye. If he was true to their cause he would naturally, of course, want to assist in a measure his Union friends who had been so long in reaching him. What could Major Hart do but expostulate?—which, with those of their ilk, literally amounted to—nothing. These valiant defenders of the Government at Washington, who, as they affirmed, had fought all the way from Chattanooga to Dalton, and from thence to Atlanta, yet onward, never stopping until the sacred precincts of South Carolina, the very hot-bed of "fire-eating," had been invaded—pillaged, we had better written—by the soldiery in blue, commanded by officers with no more self-respect or principle than the common soldiery themselves, who often when entering an evacuated, or, say,

conquered stronghold, maintained not a shadow of discipline, and many times degenerated into a mere mob. Answer, ye conquered cities of the South! Is it not true?

The imposing dignity of the grand army of the United States, was a thing of the past—had become a myth. When that stately array of brilliant names, Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, the two Johnsons, Jackson, and a host of others withdrew from the sheltering folds of the “stars and stripes,” which long ago had been the pride of the world, they, the Yankees, lost caste forever. Their lofty prestige was gone, and from the ashes of the over-thrown altars there arose a mob, a vile, scuffling rabble that swept throughout the South like a destroyer with fire and sword, and murder, approved and sanctioned by those in authority at Washington, who laughed gleefully as they drank their iced wine, and smoked their cigars, and read the morning papers that contained the news of the wanton destruction of property in the conquered strongholds—the murder, and

driving forth of innocent women and children from their homes into the pitiless, driving rain and sleet, in the hours of darkness, whose greatest and perhaps only fault was that those whom they loved best and held dearest wore the Confederate gray, and were fighting, hungry and illy clothed, for the homes of their fathers. And yet, what a cringing, whining, abject set they were when they became prisoners! We have seen them, the would-be tyrants, shorn of the insignia of office, and their cowardly fear was absolutely sickening. Not showing the undaunted front of a brave enemy who feels he is right, and therefore has respect for himself. No, these precious Yankee soldiers who came from every hiding place of corruption throughout the North, were brave enough as long as they were under the protection of their own colors; but just let them be captured by the Rebels, and lo! presto, change: their courage vanished as mists before the morning sunlight.

We speculate amusedly sometimes now, when we remember how much importance

they, the Yankee officers and soldiers, seemed to attach to the sayings and doings of the women and children of the South, who often had no other way of showing their contempt for them except by averted looks and scornful faces, and many times by a "war of words," which roused their ire as much as anything else could have done. We can only laugh now when we remember a remark made by a certain Captain Church, of General Mitchell's Division of Yankee soldiers, who entered Murfreesboro soon after the fall of Fort Donelson, which was certainly unique if nothing more. This Captain Church said that the ladies of Nashville made "shapes" at the Yankee soldiers when they came into the city. He meant "faces," but invented a new mode of expressing it. Although the years of the war were full of gloom and sorrow, and the people were quite unlike their former selves, yet they had to laugh sometimes in spite of themselves. Thus, we happened to know of an "enemy" that had been transferred from the Army of the Potomac

to Middle Tennessee, going round to the houses of private citizens with a large, old-fashioned wooden pill-box full of soda, trying to exchange it for milk, for which they had an insatiable craving. Well, this attentive, observing youth in blue had read in the newspapers, or heard somewhere, that soda was a scarce commodity in the store-rooms of Tennessee house-keepers. So, like his illustrious predecessors, he cast him about, ever on the *qui vive* for a bargain, and sought to benefit himself by the exchange of that chemical ingredient, doled out to him by his Father Abraham, so necessary in the making of good bread. Although we imagine that Tennessee house-keepers would take their biscuits and cakes "flat" a long time before they would use soda that had traveled all the way from the Old Dominion in the pockets of a not very refined Yankee soldier. *N'importe.*

Speaking of their inordinate fondness for the foamy, snowy fluid, it was no unusual occurrence, but *au contraire*, a very common thing to see, both mornings and

evenings, some of these valiant warriors in the attitude of "milk-maids," and who, if interrupted, condescended to explain they were "just getting enough to dilute their coffee," and the supreme impudence of the whole affair would strike one as being so laughable that they usually concluded thereafter not to disturb them in their self-imposed task, but trusting to their honesty (?) and better judgment to quit when they had supplied their canteens with enough to "go into their coffee."

One reminiscence calls forth another. Poor imbecile old General Van Cleve! He commanded post here for a good many months, and he was not a very brilliant military genius either—only a very harmless one. He was fond of a good dinner, and an afternoon nap, and dearly loved to repose his patriarchal head on smooth, downy pillows, far away from the dust and smoke and heat of battle. A night-cap would have been infinitely becoming to him—such a one as Red Ridinghood's grandmother might have

worn when the wolf ate her up. How he used to tremble at every random pistol shot, always in mortal fear of a raid. You see they attached great importance to raids, which had become quite the fashion throughout the South, which, on account of the exceeding great disparity in numbers between the Confederate and Federal armies, were practiced to a great extent, so that whenever the two armies could not meet in open field, detached bodies of these daring cavalrymen struck out somewhere in quest of the enemy, which they never failed to find, and for a few moments wild cheers and the ringing of carbines would explain that the "boys in gray" had awakened the Yankees somewhere, and they usually returned with a goodly array of prisoners, for whom nothing could be done except to "parole" them and send them back to "unfold a story" to those who had a military right to enquire into their unexpected absence.

And with what frantic haste did General Van Cleve's couriers sometimes arrive

from head-quarters, into the houses of citizens, with orders from the General, *in propria personne*, to "evacuate" the town immediately, which they would read in a rapid, excited way, almost unintelligible to any one but themselves, so great was their fear—something after the style of those who "flee" when none "pursue."

We remember one quiet summer morning to have been sitting in the front hall, lazily turning the pages of a new magazine, when suddenly and unannounced, at our feet dropped one of the Yankee couriers—and whether he came through the roof or the open door we have never been able to satisfy ourselves; any how he fell to reading one of these precious dispatches from General Van Cleve, stating that "all citizens must leave town immediately; [where we were all to go, General Van Cleve forgot to tell us] that a large body of Rebels was bearing down on Murfreesboro"—from the east or west, I do not remember which. At any rate, General Van Cleve was going to "shell the town" in "one hour (!) after

the approach of the Rebels." We said to the courier, "You seem to be frightened;" and he looked at us with a look which the dying Cæsar might have turned on Brutus, and said, "It may be a good deal of fun to you, Miss; but it is no fun to us." And we have not a doubt that that remark contained more truth than any ever made by that same soldier, since he served under the banner of his Father Abraham. Charge, Chester!

CHAPTER XXI.

CAPTAIN BUCKINGHAM.

IT was one of the hallucinations of the presiding dignity at Murfreesboro, that every man, woman, and child, was carrying on a clandestine correspondence with the Rebel army, and giving "aid and information" to those in authority. Consequently we were not surprised at any time to see a detachment of these distinguished gentlemen invade our premises, and halt in front of our door a line of polished muskets, while the "Major" or the "Captain" of the squad, accompanied by one or two trusty aids, made a general search of our entire possessions. Had they shown the same frantic haste to meet the Rebels in fair, open fight on the battle field as they were eager in regard to citizens' trivial correspondence, that imposing body, who sat in state at Washington, would not have been

such a long time "crushing the great Rebellion."

Such a rummaging of closets, and pulling out drawers, and scattering one's love letters in dire "confusion worse confounded," we earnestly hope we may never see again; and the grinning idiots seemed to enjoy that kind of warfare (?) more than anything else. Perhaps such petty sports corresponded well to their small caliber.

In what awful judgment did our Father Confessors sit upon us, and ply us with questions as to "where, when, and how," we last heard from our Southern friends, all of which questions the citizens took great pleasure in answering, and they may also flatter themselves they generally bore "flying colors" from the field in that contest of words where they measured lances, and Greek met Greek in fair, open fight.

Captain Buckingham, of Ohio, the Yankee Provost Marshal, under the *regime* of General Van Cleve! It would be morally wrong to pass over the reigning deities of that summer without giving *him*

his "dues," and paying off old scores. The Captain presented his august self one morning, accompanied by a detachment of Yankee soldiers, with drawn bayonets, and asked to see our humble self. We answered his summons with alacrity, and sat down to await an explanation of his honor's presence. You see, we had already been made "loyal" according to the code prescribed by those functionaries who presided over the destinies of nations, at Washington; yet we had come from the South through the Yankee lines, some months previous with a special "pass," granted and signed in person by the Federal General Mitchell himself, at his own head-quarters, where we were unfortunately caught in their lines, and had no other alternative but to return home. General Mitchell treated us quite courteously, and questioned us as to the state of our feelings on the subject of "Unionism," which we candidly avowed, after which the General informed us he thought it would be committing a "sin" for us to take the "oath," which proved he was more fastidious in

his ideas of honor than others of his brothers in arms.

So, thanking General Mitchell for his unexpected kindness, and with the "pass" in our possession, we arrived home one hot day in July. We will never forget it, as it marked an epoch in our life. We had scarcely had time to brush off the dust of the Confederacy, before a messenger arrived in hot haste, with a guard and an order, to escort us to head-quarters. And, under the necessity which knows no law, we signed our name to a paper, known as the "oath of allegiance," which was virtually a falsehood, and Major Smith and his satellites knew it at the time, and *they*, not *we*, are responsible for the sin if we committed any. Much good they ever got of our *adhesion* to that "oath."

The Major prefaced the interview which took place in Colonel Ready's office by assuming that we had become tired of the Confederacy, and had come voluntarily to renew our allegiance to the Government. He spoke exactly as if we had come to

him of our own accord, without being sent for. But when an emphatic "No" came from behind our veil, the Major looked slightly bewildered, and was non-plussed for the moment to know how to proceed. He had expected from us not defiance, but timidity; and we know he was very much irritated when we signed our name in a scrawling, illegible hand, which nobody in the world could have made out, even if their soul's salvation had depended on it. Any how, he made us to write it over three times before it was accomplished to his satisfaction.

Apropos to that, a friend of ours, a lady, was sent for to come to the Provost office, to answer some indignity shown to the Federal flag. The guard placed himself at the lady's side in the position of an attendant cavalier, when our friend coolly informed him he would either have to "walk behind or in front, one of the two, as she did not intend for a Yankee to walk through the streets by *her* side." Neither did she; so the soldier placed himself in front with "forward march!" and the lady

followed him obediently on until they reached their destination.

But to return to Captain Buckingham. We were saying, when interrupted by the recollection of this little incident, we awaited an explanation of the honor (?) which had brought the Captain to our house. It was not long coming. He "had been informed"—through what source we were never able to find out—that "we had in our possession an album," (so we had;) and that the "said album contained 'treasonable language,'" (we are repeating *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatim,*) "dangerous to the welfare of the Government of the United States," and that "he, Captain Buckingham, would like for us to produce the album."

The Captain was right; we *did* possess an album, and the album *did* contain "treasonable language," and also the unfortunate autographs of a number of our Southern friends who wore the gray, also a wreath of stars in blue, traced in an idle hour in the lonely summer of 1861, and forming the original Confederacy constel-

lation, with name of States and dates of secession attached, with proud old South Carolina occupying the central post of honor, under a painted Confederate flag with some such lines as the following :

* * * * * "Long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and home of the slave."

Which was certainly very "terrible" and very "treasonable," when we come to think of it. How potent must have been the mere name of a Rebel, to have created such fear and commotion in the bosoms of the defenders of the "stars and stripes" to cause a provost marshal to leave his business of arresting gentlemen up-town, and bring a guard with him, to trouble his brain about a poor, little, insignificant album, containing a dozen or two Rebels' names, for them to have raised such a hue and cry in that "much ado about nothing."

Now comes the cream of the whole affair. It so happened that our album that contained the unlucky autographs was from home, a gentleman acquaintance having carried it home with him a day or

two previous to the time we speak of, to copy some poetry.

We informed the right loyal majesty of the Captain of this fact, and expressed our regret in courteous terms in being unable to produce the offending document; but the Captain was obdurate, and insisted on it being sent for immediately, as it was "dangerous to the safety of the Washington Government."

On our word and honor, we are not exaggerating in the least, and can *prove* that every word we are writing is the truth. And we are morally certain to-day that Captain Buckingham always believed that our album was intentionally away from home; whereas, we had never given the subject a thought; and we also think that if he had not had his visual organs gratified, then and there, that he would have caused General Van Cleve to order an extra relay of soldiers.

He dispatched a servant to the house of our acquaintance, with a note to return our book. The servant soon returned with the information that the gentleman's

house was locked up, and he had gone up town. In the meantime Captain Buckingham's brow grew black as a thunder-cloud; so the servant went on errand number two. This time he was more fortunate; so, after all that botheration, the Captain had the pleasure to do his duty, so as to be able to report to his superior officers.

After a thorough examination—we think he read every word in it, from beginning to end—Captain Buckingham said that it would be “necessary to send our book to General Sherman,” who was marching to the sea through Georgia. So the Captain proceeded to relieve ourself of our pass, to which we were entitled by virtue of our “oath of allegiance:” and he informed us that we need never apply for another pass from them, at which we could well afford to laugh, remembering we had no where to go, and if we had, we would have had nobody to go with us; yet, although we never used our pass, we always had it regularly renewed in order to give them as much trouble as possible.

In the meantime, Captain Buckingham told us that he had been informed that we had been carrying on a clandestine correspondence with the "Southern Confederacy," and was known to have sent out "large bodies of clothing through the lines," which was emphatically a falsehood, as we had no money at the time, scarcely enough with which to purchase a calico dress. We willingly confessed to the will but not to the deed, as the sole aid which we had recently afforded was in contributing fifty cents in greenbacks to purchase a pair of woolen hose to be sent in a box to the Rebel prisoners at Camp Chase.

This was the mountain that came from the mole-hill—this the information that was transmitted to Sherman at the head of his tens of thousands of soldiers in blue. We supposed Sherman to have been too busy, plundering and burning and stealing in Georgia, to pay any more attention to what was going on back here. At any rate, we never heard from the album any more, although we were sorry to part with it on account of the many mem-

ories connected with it, and not for any intrinsic value.

We never lacked for a word in our contest with Captain Buckingham, and he sat aghast sometimes when he discovered he was not inspiring us with much fear. When he retired from the contest, if he did not say, "Lay on, McDuff," he muttered something very like the words which follow that quotation.

So much for Buckingham.

This is only one of the many thousand petty outrages practiced throughout the South upon those who were unable to help themselves, and were afraid sometimes when these gentlemen (?) came to search their personal possessions and hear when we heard from our Southern friends.

We will always remember a remark made by a little girl only a few years old, whose papa's house had been searched from one end to the other by the Yankees, which quiet upset the family and frightened the children nearly out of their senses, who saw in the array of bayonets in front of their door something quite ter-

rible. The child was crying bitterly after the soldiers were gone, and said :

“O mamma! I wish we all were in heaven!”

On being asked why, she replied :

“If we were in heaven we would never see any more Yankees.”

CHAPTER XXII.

CITIZENS ON THE FORTS.

THERE is one thing for which it will take two more generations to forgive those in authority at Murfreesboro at the time of which we write. It was during those dark days of the winter of 1864, when a cloud seemed to shut out the sunshine from everywhere—all over the South. Turn where we would, we saw nothing to comfort us; not one ray of light came through the darkness. We only heard the whispering voice of despair from every quarter. We could only pray and hope and try, as best we might, to send words of cheer and encouragement to our Southern soldiers, who were remaining to the end. To us there will always be something sublime in the conduct of those men who cheered and fought in the dark days as well as in the bright—always courageous,

always hoping, yet ready to forego any privation, to endure any calamity, no matter how terrible, for the success of the cause for which they were enlisted.

The events to which we allude happened during those dark months of the winter of 1864, when the Federal authorities, after having exhausted themselves in the catalogue of their atrocities, bethought themselves of something else not before thought of. They decided among them that they would protect themselves by placing a line of citizens, old, gray-haired gentlemen, who had dared in the face of the Federal army with thousands of bayonets, to be honest, and not to *pretend* an Unionism which every one knew they could not feel.

Well, they, the officers in command, caused to be arrested and placed in the fort in the most dangerous places, these gray-haired gentlemen, who were submitting to every privation that came to them, cheerfully and unrepiningly, while their sons were away from home, and dying everywhere.

It was a pitiable sight to see them being marched to the fortifications in spite of expostulation and entreaties, which, with them, never amounted to anything beyond their getting laughed at for their pains, and placed in line of battle with the Federal soldiers. Could anything more diabolical be imagined? And we found ourselves wondering what they would do next; for it seemed to us they had done everything mean under the sun that men had ever been guilty of. The very fiends themselves could not have contrived anything more cruel than the idea of forcing citizens to fight for the Union, when every sentiment of their hearts rebelled at the thought. By this time we had become so accustomed to everything terrible, that scarcely anything excited much surprise. As for their newspapers, they would not tell the truth when they knew it.

For instance, we remember one quiet evening, when the Yankee army occupied the town, to have been startled by a loud pistol-shot down the street; and when we enquired the cause, as we saw a crowd

gathering on the street, it became known that a Yankee cavalryman was riding leisurely along Main Street, and amused himself by firing into a crowd of little girls, standing on a pavement in front of a house. The shot wounded a beautiful little girl severely in the throat, and it was a long time before she recovered.

Two days afterward, the Yankee newspapers were full of the "Rebel atrocities," and among other things, particular mention was made of this incident, and an exact description was given of the entire affair, with this important omission. The Northern papers stated she was shot by a Confederate cavalryman, riding through the streets, instead of Federal, when the Confederates had not been in town at all—only came near enough to burn the bridges in the vicinity, and the command under General Jo. Wheeler passed on and made their unsuccessful raid on Fort Donelson.

We took upon ourself to correct the mistake, and asked the *Louisville Journal*, of that day, in the name of truth and jus-

tice, to correct the mistake which had been made in their columns; but, true to the masters whom they served, they permitted it to go uncorrected. The officers in command in Murfreesboro also let the man go unpunished, and doubtless regarded it as a good joke.

Not long afterward, a young lady was shot and wounded from the public turnpike, standing in her own door just out of town on the Woodbury road, without any possible excuse, as everything was quiet, and no one expecting anything of the kind.

And still the people had to submit, being powerless to help themselves. And the usual fate of those who complained of the outrages at head-quarters, was to be sent under guard to drag out their weary days in prison; and in those last years of war, to have been in "jail" was something of an honor instead of its having been a disgrace. It was only men of note and influence, whose opinions were "dangerous to the Government," that were incarcerated in military prisons during the

reign of terror, and there were but few men of standing who were not, at some time or other, arrested during the war for disloyalty, and made to pay the penalty by imprisonment.

Yet these people who came among us with their hands stained with every crime known under the sun, expected us to fraternize with them; and when the war ended, came among us to live, and were surprised that families did not receive them socially around their fire-side circle with open arms, and welcome them among us. So long as they were Union, among those of congenial spirits, it was all right; but what right have they among us? The very men who fought against us, and helped to bring defeat and want upon the South, are here among us, and they run for office and get elected by the negroes, who, in their blind ignorance, have no better sense than to cling to the frail bark that promises to see them safely through.

There were a few Union men here who affiliated with the Federals, and saved what they had, and added more to their

stock of valuable possessions—men whose fences were *not* burned, nor their property molested—men who were good Rebels, and whose Union sentiment lay, a thing concealed, in the first year of the war, and until they saw, or thought they saw, the beginning of the end. These men, who changed so suddenly and unexpectedly from Southernism to Unionism, and went after their weak, fickle sons in prison, who had not sense enough to have an opinion of their own, will forever bear a taint on their good name. Just such as these we have to thank for where we stand to-day. Let them go for what they are worth. Nobody feels an atom of respect for them, and they have no influence socially anywhere, save that which they command in financial circles by the ring of the solid metal, purchased at the sacrifice of *that* thing which *men* hold of more value than life itself: *i. e.*, honor.

We left our old friend and acquaintance in the beginning of our story, Major Hart, with his elegant plantation in the hands of his friends, the Yankees. We believe we

have said that the Major was beginning already to repent of his Unionism, seeing that in the eyes of the invaders it availed him nothing—did not even procure for him the great respect and deference to which he had always been accustomed. They assumed entire control of his magnificent plantation with the air of those to the “manor born,” coolly ordered the servants to open the wine cellars for their gratification, and drank, with the air of connoisseurs, the rich, mellow wine, which, when opened, filled the air with a delicate perfume, faint and fragrant. They poured the great silver goblets, which stood on the side-board, full to the brim, and tossed it down with evident relish, and helped themselves bountifully from the well-filled silver cake baskets, which had been the especial pride of the Southern housewife.

Everybody knows how delightful it was to have visited in well-appointed Southern households, in her palmy days previous to the desolating foot-steps of the war that swept away her gods and overturned her

household altars. Well may they bemoan the days that can never return, when they endure the discomforts of the present style of house-keeping, powerless to help themselves; when your cook goes home at night—nothing can tempt her to sleep on your premises; oh, no! it looks too much as if they belonged to you—and, ten to one, you may never lay eyes on her again. Your dining-room servant always hastens away in the evening before she has half attended to her business, so afraid she will not get to mingle in the uproar that goes on at the Church, in that revival which has never ceased for a single night since the trumpet tones of the departed Father Abraham proclaimed from one end of the South to the other, freedom to the down-trodden slave! The pious groans and tears of these liberated menials, mingled with shouts and prayers, have been ascending heavenward nightly, without intermission, ever since they first tasted the intoxicating draught of freedom. You drop asleep at night, and awake suddenly by hearing a dismal wail almost un-

der your window, and your first impression is that somebody is being murdered in the street; when behold! the groan of despair comes from some repentant sinner, tenderly supported in the arms of two sympathizing friends, returning home somewhere toward the "wee sma' hours."

Nothing ever hinders these pious saints from attending "church;" neither the rain, nor snow, nor driving sleet; and they certainly deserve for an epitaph above their graves, when the time comes for them to be gathered to the home of their fathers, "Faithful unto the end."

In the good old days that are gone forever, when a visitor arrived in a Southern household, it was generally the occasion for great rejoicing; but now, when they come unexpectedly, you are almost sorry when you remember the present insufficient system of domestic service, feeling your impotence to help yourselves.

A lady acquaintance was laughingly describing a dinner party, soon after the war closed, given by herself. There was a goodly sprinkle of "distinguished guests"

assembled on the occasion, and everything had passed off moderately well, considering the corps of dusky attendants were new recruits, until the cloth had been removed for dessert ; whereupon, one of the new recruits, in her laudable desire to be of service, and of doing something to please her new mistress, snatched up a dish of cabbage, and invited one of the distinguished judges to "have some more," which was declined amidst the general laugh that went around the board, and to the intense mortification of the elegant hostess, who had no other alternative but to laugh too, and make the best of the ridiculous *faux pas*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOUTHERN HOUSE-KEEPING BEFORE THE
WAR.

As we were saying in the previous chapter, there was something delightful in visiting in a well-regulated Southern household previous to the war; but alas! those times are, unhappily for her people, numbered among the "things that were;" and a remembrance of the good old times only renders the present situation more intolerable. Then, when you made a visit from home, exquisitely tidy, white aproned maids met you at the door and received your traveling wraps, smilingly ushering you to your room, where they carefully dusted your things, and placed them exactly where they should be; after which they knelt, unbidden, and unstrapped your trunks; and, if necessary to speak at all, spoke in a low, carefully mod-

ulated voice, which betrayed the respect which they had been taught from their infancy to feel for their superiors, and from which, now, alas! they seem to have departed forever, owing to the feelings which they have imbibed from the "blue bonnets over the border." And then, the great bowls of sparkling, perfumed waters; and the goodly array of snowy, damask towels, and all the elegant appliances of the toilet; and the comfortable easy chair that always awaited one in their own room; and the detached maid who had received instructions from her mistress, previous to your arrival, to wait on you exclusively during the length of your stay, in case you did not carry your servant with you.

Now, all this is changed; and "madam," when she has company, is compelled to shut her eyes to a great many of the delinquencies of servants, or she will be forced, *a la Yankee*, to find herself with a house full of visitors, in the midst of preparations for an elaborate dinner party, without "help," should the lady be so

unfortunate as to attempt anything resembling a state dinner. And however tempting the delicacies compounded below in the culinary department; however elegant looking the elaborately iced "white-cake;" the beautifully transparent jellies; the exquisite aroma of your coffee; the snowy biscuit, and ravishing waffles; the firm, yellow mould of your butter, which comes iced to your table; when you remember it requires time and strength and labor with which to prepare all these things, it detracts considerably from the enjoyment you otherwise would have felt in the entertainment of your guests. It is very laborious to beat the cake mixture properly, and, besides, it causes one to become very red in the face, which is anything but becoming; and, besides, when one has company, one likes to appear as charming as possible, provided the company is worth cultivating; and to come, flushed and heated from the kitchen, discomposed in manner and discomposed in mind, and to sit down and attempt to converse indifferently on the current events of the day, is

a matter which would bewilder the Napoleonic ladies of our day. Besides, sweeping trains, which some ladies imagine add to their dignity of appearance, and frizzed *coiffures*, are incompatible with the labor of necessity to be performed in the culinary department; and, in our opinion, it requires a well-balanced mind to perform her own domestic labor, and, without being flurried, re-arrange her toilet in time to present herself in the parlor a few minutes before dinner is served.

To sit composedly and see your servants—these dusky satellites for which boon of freedom a million lives were wasted—pour your goblet brimming full of water until it runs over the top, and you, in sheer desperation, beg them to desist; when they spill milk, and gravy, and everything else in the world, on your handsomest “unwash” dress, with a recklessness which proves they do not care, you will acknowledge it provoking in the extreme.

Yet Southern ladies try to make the best of what they can in nowise help,

although sometimes they find themselves longing for the "good old time," as did the wandering Israelites for the "flesh-pots of Egypt."

We have not over-drawn the picture of domestic troubles; and many of our ladies will readily recognize the sketch as painted from life, only not half so bad as the reality, for which there is no relief. The perplexing question of not "What will he do with it?" but "what shall we do?" remains unanswered; and from the present aspect of affairs, we are likely to get more entangled every day in "confusion worse confounded."

Hear what the Civil Rights Bill has to say. It reads as follows:

SECTION 1. That all citizens, and other persons within the jurisdiction of the United States, shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters and other places of amusement, and also of common schools and public institutions of learning or benevolence supported in whole or part by general taxation, and of cemeteries so supplied, and also institutions known as industrial colleges, endowed by the United States, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law, and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude.

SECTION 2. That any person who shall violate the foregoing section by denying to any person entitled to its benefits, except for reasons by law applicable to citizens of every race and color, and regardless of any previous condition of servitude, the full enjoyment of any accommodations, advantages, facilities or privileges in said section enumerated, or inciting such denial, shall, for every offense, forfeit and pay the sum of five hundred dollars to the person aggrieved thereby, to be recovered in action on the case, with full costs; and shall also be deemed guilty of misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than one thousand dollars, or shall be imprisoned not more than one year, provided that the party so aggrieved shall not recover more than one penalty; and if the offense is a refusal of burial, the penalty may be recovered by the heirs-at-law of the person whose body has been refused burial; and, provided further, that all persons may elect to sue for the penalty aforesaid, or to proceed under their rights at common law and the State statutes; and, having so elected to proceed, in the one mode or the other, their right to proceed in the other jurisdiction shall be barred; but this proviso shall not apply to criminal proceedings either under this act or the criminal law of the State.

SECTION 3. That the District and Circuit Courts of the United States shall have, exclusively of the courts of the several States, cognizance of all crimes and offenses against, and violations of, the provisions of this act, and actions for penalty given by the preceding section may be prosecuted in the Territorial, District, or Circuit Courts of the United States, wherever the defendant may be found, without regard to the party, and district attorneys, and marshals, and deputy marshals of the United States, and commissioners appointed by the Circuit and Territorial Courts of the United States, with powers of arresting and imprisonment and bailing offenders against the laws of the United States, are hereby specially authorized and required to institute pro-

ceedings against every person who shall violate the provisions of this act, and cause him to be arrested and imprisoned or bailed, as the case may be, for trial before such court of the United States or Territorial Court as by law has cognizance of the offense, except in respect of the right of action occurring to the person aggrieved; and such district attorneys shall cause such proceedings to be prosecuted to their termination as in other cases, provided that nothing contained in this section shall be construed to deny or defeat the civil action accruing to any person by reason of this act or otherwise.

SECTION 4. That no citizen, providing he meet all the other qualifications which are or may be prescribed by law, shall be disqualified for grand or petit juror in any court of the United States or of a State on account of race, color, or any previous condition of servitude, and any officer or other person, charged with any duty in the selection or summoning of jurors who shall exclude or fail to summon any citizen for the cause aforesaid, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and fined not more than one thousand dollars.

SECTION 5. That all cases arising under the provisions of this act in the courts of the United States shall be reviewable by the Supreme Court of the United States, without regard to the sum in controversy, under the same provisions and regulations as are now provided by law for the review of other causes in said court.

Thus this bill passed the Senate. We have copied it *verbatim*, and although not very lucidly stated, the sum and substance of it all may be summed up in a few words: That "cuffee," about whom the country has been in an uproar for many years, is to be granted equal rights and

privileges with his fairer brethren; he is to send his dusky progeny to sit side by side with his former master's children, and thereby grow in his own importance.

“As you sow, so you shall reap;” and the time to reap the whirlwind has come. Those Union men—those renegades—scattered over the South; those who went arm in arm, one in sentiment with the invaders of our homes; who opened their doors, and gave a cordial welcome to our enemies, and set before them the best they had in the way of entertainment; and who played the spy on their former neighbors, like the cravens that they were, and who took especial pains to inform their blue-coated friends who the “dangerous families” were, and who went to the Yankee generals in command during Hood's raid in Tennessee, and said to them, “burn that man's house, or his fence; he is a violent Rebel;” upon which the commanding Yankee general hastened frantically to oblige his friend, and, soon afterwards, a column of dense smoke would be seen ascending to the

sky, from which burst great sheets of flame, scarcely giving the inmates of the unfortunate residence time to collect them a change of wearing apparel; now *these* Union men helped to establish the government which is trying to force the Civil Rights Bill upon the Southern people. Now, Union men of the South! we admire *consistency*, and if you had the moral courage to turn upon your former friends and aid the Yankees, who, you knew at the time, were fighting to set the negro upon terms of social equality with your own families, go ahead, and be consistent! Don't shirk back in this "hour which tries men's souls," but be true to your colors. Set them the example; open your pew doors to your cook, your carriage-driver, your dining-room servant, and with as affable a manner as you can command for the occasion, say to them, "Walk in; have a seat. You are free-born American citizens as well as ourselves, and have as much right here as we have."

Chacun a son gout! We fancy it would be a good joke, and we can not possibly

have any objections to see Miss Grant or Miss Sherman or Admiral Dahlgren's daughter being whirled in the "mazes of the giddy dance," *a la* white silk, point lace, diamonds and all, with some burly, black African, at Cape May, Newport, Saratoga, Long Branch, and the various other popular watering places, at which the beauty and fashion of the North congregate during the summer season. Why should not "cuffee" play the attendant cavalier upon those young ladies, when they remember the million of lives wasted in arriving at the solution of the vexing problem of the social equality of the negro, which has agitated the country to the disruption of the "Union, as it was," so many years ago.

Would "cuffee" feel "at home?"—that is the question—dining on a spiced round of beef at the Fifth Avenue Hotel? Would he always be able to read the bill of fare? Would he deport himself gracefully in the presence of the assembled elegants that frequent the fashionable hotels of the North? Would he not spill

his champagne, upset his plate, and commit a thousand other misdemeanors, unworthy the name and dignity of the colored race, which the "progressive party" are trying so hard to bring into notoriety?

Now, as we were saying, we have no possible objection to the "social equality" being confined to the North; for, as we said before, that would be consistent, and we and everybody admire consistency. It would be legitimate; but as for ourselves, we claim the "inestimable privilege" of free-born American citizens, and rather fancy we will continue in our old way. When that is established throughout the land there will be an end to free schools; when, instead of adding to the prosperity of a community, have only been everywhere a disadvantage. So much for Civil Rights.

CHAPTER XXIV.

YANKEE TROOPS CAMPING ON MAJOR HART'S
PLANTATION.

WE left our old friend, Major Hart, in the hands of his Federal friends, and as we have already said, the Major had begun to repent him of his Unionism; but the repentance came too late. His residence was occupied as a general's headquarters, it being the most convenient and elegantly furnished house accessible at the time; and, in fact, the Yankees by this time had begun to be fastidious in the choice of their stopping places, and had begun to love luxury and ease quite as well as those maligned far-off Southerners, whom they were taking to such severe task for their indolence, and fighting so hard to deprive them of their servants. It was a strange scene for old South Carolina. The officers and soldiers in their

national uniform of blue, lolling, smoking, and drinking on the front piazzas, morning and evening, coming and going at pleasure. The house of the "bloated aristocrat," as they were pleased to style him, was unceremoniously turned into a scene of feasting and revelry; and they caroused far into the night, and bestarred officers strode with haughty step through the long double parlors, over the soft carpets that gave back no echo to the firm footfall.

There was one portrait in the parlor which attracted much attention, and which many officers from the neighboring camps came and stood before with something of surprise and curiosity blended. In its heavy, handsome gilt frame, with its elaborate mouldings, it occupied the center of the room, reaching from the low marble mantle nearly to the ceiling. It was the portrait of Gilbert St. Maurice, painted in Richmond during the first year of the war, by one who was celebrated in his profession. He was superbly handsome in his fighting jacket of gray, with top-boots

reaching to the knee, and sword buckled on one side, while in his right hand he held his plumed cap, while standing at full length. His light wavy hair was brushed back from the fair, broad brow, and in his keen, bright blue eye there was an unmistakable look of defiance. Next to her lover, Marion Hart adored this portrait; and it has long been her custom to bring a daily offering of fresh flowers, which, arranged in exquisite wreaths, she had hung on the projecting edges of the frame, honoring her dead in that most simple and beautifully touching manner. The flowers were all withered now, and, crumbling, had fallen on the floor. Every breath of wind that came through the open windows blew some petal of the faded rose leaves from the neglected wreath which spoke of the undying love which Marion Hart felt for her lover, who was sleeping under the pine trees, unconscious of the ills which had wrecked his Southern home, and of the sad, dreary thoughts which rendered the life of Marion Hart a weary burden.

She had not been below stairs since her father's house had been in possession of the Federal officers, and missed her accustomed daily visit to the portrait. The officers, full of curiosity when they first came, had questioned the servants, and from them learned it was the portrait of "Miss Marion's dead lover," killed in Georgia, and one of the "handsomest men in the State," supplemented the garrulous servants; and then they fell to questioning the talkative maids as to how "Miss Marion" looked, and how she dressed, and tried hard to find out everything about her, since they were denied the privilege of meeting her in person. Feeling their importance in being appealed to, they told the curious officers everything they could think of connected with Marion: How she had not visited for such a long, long time, and said she was never known to smile, and always wore black ever since her lover had been killed. To all of which the Yankee officers listened with appreciative attention, asking them many questions relative to domestic af-

fairs ; and then the communicative maids told them how Gilbert St. Maurice's mother raved and moaned for her dead son ; and there was something of awe in their voices when they spoke—and they spoke in a subdued whisper while making these communications—how her screams startled the sleeping servants from their quarters a long distance from the house ; “ there never was anything like it,” added they in a low voice. Then they went on to tell them how Miss Marion shut herself up in her room for weeks at a time, never seeing anyone but the servant who waited on her all the time ; and how, at last, late one evening, weeks and weeks after the battle, she came down, and culled and arranged a beautiful wreath of flowers, and placed it on the portrait. And then they commented on how long and fixedly she had regarded the portrait, which she had not seen for such a long time after the news of his death had reached her ears. The communicative maids also informed the Federal officers that Miss Marion was in the habit of coming there

every morning until their army had taken quarters on Major Hart's plantation, and had possession of the house. And, moreover, they told that Miss Marion declared she never would come down as long as one of them remained on the place, which made some of them very angry, while others were consumed with curiosity to see her, and invented every means to procure their ends, which signally failed in the accomplishment of their designs.

The servants had never seen a Yankee before, and they stupidly gazed at them with a species of awe mingled with astonishment; yet, for all that, they waited on them with fear and trembling, glad, no doubt, in their inmost hearts, that their deliverers had come; but just then they were afraid to make it known by outward signs.

Mrs. Hart, the mistress of the household, was submissively polite, and had her table served with every delicacy that could be procured at the time, and all the while, too, with her accustomed former style and grandeur. She had at her command a

well-trained corps of dining-room servants who knew just exactly where and when to do everything, and the one art in which they particularly excelled was in waiting at table. The Yankees expressed their astonishment, and seemed impressed with the Southern style of living. There were but few of them who expected to find such luxury and refinement in the style of their living; and one, a Yankee officer, possibly more honest in his outspoken sentiments than the rest of them, remarked in Mrs. Hart's presence, that he "did not in the least blame the Southern people for fighting for their slaves and their homes, and Southerners certainly understood to perfection the art of training servants." The officer said he liked it, "and as for his part, he would as soon play quits as not with the Yankees and turn Rebel himself, as the South was the jolliest place to live he had been to for a long while. Moreover," quoth the honest Yankee, "I like the people who are not hypocrites, and who do not hesitate to avow their sentiments, even in the face of

our tens of thousands of soldiers. Somehow I feel an innate respect for them which I could not feel for those who profess to be "Union," and yet, in their inmost hearts they despise us."

There were a great many of the Northern army who became soldiers through sheer curiosity, and a desire to travel and become familiar with the manners and customs of the South, of which they had gathered the most preposterous and erroneous ideas from the exaggerated stories of Southern cruelty and Southern barbarity that flooded the Northern press. And the sentiments of many of them underwent a change after spending some months in the South, and seeing for themselves. "Seeing is believing," and we have often heard Yankees acknowledge that they had been taught to believe, previous to their coming among us, that the slaves who tilled the Southern planter's fields were always driven to their daily tasks under the whip and lash of a merciless overseer, who had usually no pity whatever for the unfortunate beings ;

and that the Southern negro was a dejected looking being, whose looks proved plainly that he was disgusted with that thing which men call life, and weary of living. So much for hear-say; but the reality was something different, as they learned afterward.

A faithful maid, who had slept in Marion's bed-room from her childhood, waited on her during the period of her self-imposed banishment. The maid kept Marion fully informed as to everything that was going on under her father's roof. Marion felt no desire to meet any of them; and she kept thinking, ever and anon, of her dead lover, in his grave under the solemn, tender light of the stars, and also thought, with bitterness of heart, that some of these very men might have been the ones who committed the deed. Could she meet them?—the roysters down stairs—who bet on horseflesh and swore loudly, in the presence of any member of the family? No; she kept her word; and although under every pretext that could possibly be imagined they endeavored to

gain a peep at Miss Hart, they were never gratified. The commanding general asked many times for the pleasure of seeing Miss Hart in the parlor, but the answer came as regularly as before, that "Miss Hart was not well, and desired to be excused."

Thus the message was conveyed in the least offensive form; but they were not the words of Marion to her father, who in cowardice came to his daughter's room in person, insisted on her going down to see the officers in order to conciliate them as much as possible, and to cause them to be less harsh in their treatment of him. You see, he was reaping the "whirlwind." Marion bade her father to say to these Yankee officers that she hated them, and it was impossible to think of coming among them to entertain them with music and song, as they particularly requested she would; that the very air they breathed would stifle her; that she had no desire to meet any of them, stained as their hands were with every foul crime that men could be guilty of.

They were consumed with curiosity to see the haughty Southern girl who staid all the time up-stairs, and never showed her face all the time the army remained on the premises. And they indulged in many a coarse jest at her expense, which were reported to her above stairs until she felt like rising and confronting the entire Yankee army, and pouring out the intense scorn and bitterness she felt for them to their very faces.

A great many of the officers brought their wives with them, and it was amusing to see the airs they tried to put on before these Southern people: only they did not know how to go about it. They expressed their astonishment freely at the superiority of style indulged in by these Southern people. They had not expected to see anything of the kind, so they affirmed in the presence of several members of the family. One might possibly have imagined, to have heard these ladies (?) talk, that they belonged to the upper *strata* of Northern society, only one would have been most egregiously mistaken. Noth-

ing of the kind. That flattering unctio could not have, with any propriety, been laid to their charge. It may be an insult to the whole Yankee nation; but the *elite* of Northern society was not in the army, save a few West Point officers; and, of course, the wives and daughters of those who came among us belonged to the *demi monde*.

In proof of the foregoing statement, think, if you please, of the pianos, china, glassware, books, pictures, and carpets that these precious people who came South by virtue of sole power, packed up and shipped to their Northern homes. How many families throughout the South had vast quantities of handsome silverware, precious heirlooms in families, taken from them, not under cover of darkness, but in broad, open day-time, and packed before their own eyes, and sent to their families in the North, by officers of the United States army who professed to be fighting for the Union! Union, indeed! These valorous defenders even went so far as to rob ladies' wardrobes of valuable

silk dresses, velvet cloaks, and handsome jewelry, and send them home to their wives and daughters. This, as many others can testify, is no idle rumor, but a stubborn, indisputable fact.

But why should we be astonished, when we remember that these people who came among us were servants at home, who, having unbridled license to act as they pleased, helped themselves to whatever suited their fancy. The really educated, refined portion of Northern people could ill afford to risk their precious bodies where the bullets fell thickest, and so they staid "at home," and purchased them substitutes. The North could well afford to lose some of the thousands of foreigners who swarmed our shores. How very laughable it was to hear some of these Dutch-Yankees repeat their stereotyped cant about the "old flag," when a yard of checked cotton would have had about as much meaning for them, so far as the sentiment was concerned. And the nasal twang with which some of them pronounced the name of "John Morgan" was

inimitable. The North needed thinning out, and the dead were scarcely missed at all. The Yankee generals cared but little for the lives of the common soldiery. They knew the gaps could be readily supplied the moment they were wanted; so they determined to crush the South by brute force, as they were penetrating enough to perceive that it could be done in no other way. Remember how Grant massed his thousands in front of the stubborn Lee, and rushed them headlong into the very jaws of death! The Yankee army might, with propriety, be compared to locusts; you might destroy an army of them, and they came twice as many as before. Just such men as these the "blue blood" of the South were contending against. You might kill a Yankee, and lo! straightway there arose five men in his place of like ilk.

CHAPTER XXV.

A YANKEE CITIZEN COMES SOUTH FOR THE BODY OF HIS BROTHER, AND CARRIES HOME HIS REMAINS IN A TRAVELING VALISE.

SOME of those who remained at home in the North during the war were certainly good financiers, as the following incident goes to prove.

A young man came South after the war closed for the body of his brother, who went to his reward at the battle of Stone's River, and was buried in the Yankee cemetery out there. So, armed *cap a pie* with pickaxes and spades, he dug for the coffin, which, when reached, was found to have decayed, and in its place was only a small heap of bones. Inasmuch as this devoted brother collected and arranged according to fancy, and packed in his traveling valise the bones of his defunct Yankee brother, and sorrowfully wended his way North-

ward where he said he could purchase a coffin after he got there, and it would come "much cheaper than to travel with a coffin."

It seems a pity to have disturbed him in his last resting place, where he died fighting for the "old flag" and the emancipation of the negro; to have disturbed him in his dreamless slumber, where his bones reposed in hallowed peace, in close proximity to the spot where, in "Lang Syne," he gathered blackberries, and made the welkin ring with such patriotic songs as "Rally round the flag," and—

"We will drive the traitor host
From the land we love the most,
Shouting the battle-cry of freedom!"

Rest in peace in thy dreamless bed,
O valorous defender of a nation's insulted standard! and may the memory of your virtues console those whom you left behind for your loss!

How they hated the Southern people for not having been accustomed to work as their wives and daughters! and some

of them had the impertinence to inform us that when the war was over, and the "colored people" set free—that is the expression that came so glibly from their lips—that we would be compelled, *a la Yankee*, to wash, and bake, and brew, and then we would not be "any better" than themselves.

In speaking of the lower classes of society filling the armies of the North, we will state here for the benefit of all whom it may concern, that the Union sentiment of the South was confined to the illiterate and unrefined in nearly every town and city in the South. Many of the Yankee officers, holding high positions, acknowledged this fact with regret. Who can deny this? They were told that the people had been forced to be Rebels, and they only waited the advent of the Union army to rise by the thousand and flock to the "old flag." But no cheers greeted them when they took possession of the conquered strongholds, and they were met by people with scowling brows and averted faces, who did not attempt to conceal the

scorn and hatred they felt for the invaders of their homes.

We have thought sometimes it may have been well for the South that she did not gain her independence, for there is a weakness on the part of Southerners to regard labor as disassociated with refined, genteel cultivation which is probably the result of education. In former years, men of wealth and social distinction sent their sons to college, and they usually remained there long enough to receive a diploma from the law department or return home with an M. D. attached to their names, with but an indistinct idea of ever practicing their profession, unless, perchance, their patrimonial slice of the estate was swallowed up to pay somebody's "security debt," and then they had a profession to "fall back on;" and, moreover, in those days it was considered "genteel," as the phrase went, "to have a profession." Young gentlemen in those days, the sons of wealthy fathers, were attended by a body-servant, a *valet de chambre*, who waited on them assiduously, caught and

saddled their horses, and was always ready, at a moment's warning, to execute any commands which they saw fit to give them. They brought them the morning papers while they lingered at the breakfast table, and stood ready to pick up their paper or handkerchief should they be so indiscreet as to drop those articles.

Young misses tripped along gaily to school attended by white-turbaned, white-aproned servants, who relieved them of their books and satchels and brought them warm dinners on cold winter days. In the afternoon, should it have rained, and the streets wet and muddy, a host of retainers in waiting thronged the school-room doors with shawls, umbrellas, and over-shoes, while at the gate, enthroned in state in their seats, sat many a dusky coachman, waiting for the petted darlings of parents who would not permit their children's feet to come in contact with the muddy, dripping pavements. Thus it was in the good old times that will never come back. Have we not drawn a life-like picture of the past?

After all, it is pleasant to think how we lived then, and with what native courage we accepted the issue ; yet it will take two more generations to eradicate the bitter feelings and prejudices generated in our minds by the result of the war.

After all, self-reliance is the best school in which to develop one's latent talents, and we best appreciate that object or result most difficult of attainment. There is a feeling of independence very agreeable to contemplate, when you remember you are the architect of your own fortune. There is also a necessity which knows no law ; and Southern people now put forth their individual efforts without the risk of losing caste in the circles in which they move. There is an adage that the "end justifies the means," which may be true in this instance, only we do not like the channel through which the result was reached ; and it is a matter of impossibility to entertain any kindly feeling for those who accomplished their ends through such a diabolical mode of procedure. However, let it pass. Time, perhaps, may eradicate the feeling.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CURIOUS DEATH-BED SCENE OF A YANKEE
SOLDIER.

“CHRIST! how the winds rave, and the waters roar! Don't you see that bloody hand there on the wall? Take it away! Hide it from my sight! O God, my punishment is greater than I can bear! How that man's eyes stare at me with a vacant, meaningless glare! O my mother, pity your boy! I can never, never forget!”

And the sick man's voice rose in a despairing wail, and he covered his head with the coverlet on the bed, as if he would shut out some horrid phantasmagoria.

Dr. Jenkins, a surgeon of the United States army, arose from where he was reading by the soft light of an astral lamp, and turned the light a little lower,

and came and adjusted the pillows under the sick soldier's head.

“My poor fellow!” said the Doctor, “you are suffering intensely, there is no doubt, but your physical suffering is not to be compared with your mental torture at this time.”

Dr. Jenkins spoke in a subdued undertone in an aside to the lady in whose mansion this tragic death-bed scene was about to be enacted. There was no storm—the earth lay bathed in the soft, mellow light of a full September moon, and the “bloody hand” that the disordered imagination of the sick soldier, whose cheeks were flushed to crimson with a consuming fever, had fancied was creeping along the wall, was only a moon-beam that came through the boughs of the magnolia which over-shadowed the window, and touched the wall with a finger of light. From the far-off corner in the spacious grounds which surrounded the mansion, some one was playing a melancholy strain on a flute, which added to the loneliness of the hour, when we remember

that the hands of the watch which lay open on the small table by the bed-side pointed to the hour of one o'clock.

The room which had been assigned to the sick soldier wearing the blue of the Federal army was exquisitely clean and refreshing to look at, as the weather was intensely warm. A soft September breeze lifted the freshest of white muslin curtains, and fanned the sick man's fevered brow. The floor was covered with clean, cool matting, and everything connected with the bed was snowy and fresh enough to please the most fastidious taste. Yet it was a couch of thorns to the sick man, for remorse was doing its work, and gnawing his soul, which caused him in his delirium to rave and curse in despair, and lament the day that he was ever born.

The lady of the mansion, who with her benign expression looked like an angel of mercy, as arrayed in a spotless robe of white she arose and stood by the sick man's bed-side, and wetting a napkin in a basin of ice-water carefully laid it on the soldier's burning face. Her heart was

touched with sympathy when she witnessed the torture which racked this soldier, both physically and mentally, as he stood on the brink of eternity; for it was very evident that his hours here were numbered.

Dr. Jenkins prepared an opiate which, after he had taken, he placed a goblet of iced water to his lips, which he drank eagerly, and then fell into a deep slumber which lasted for more than an hour. The doctor felt his pulse, and, after counting the beats, remarked that he could not last much longer: he thought scarcely until daylight; and said to the lady:

“Madam, you look curious, and no doubt think, from this sick man’s ravings, that under it all lies some deeper meaning, some hidden tragedy which you are not acquainted with. You have been excessively kind to this suffering wreck of humanity, which touches the secret chords of human sympathy in spite of ourselves. This man, whose soul will soon stand in the presence of his God, has committed one of the foulest crimes which a man could

be guilty of. You know that our army has been guilty of deeds which would shock the most hardened criminal; yet only to you who have shown so much of the milk of human kindness when not expected of you, I will explain in good time what you may regard as a curious phase of his suffering.

“This man, James Caldwell, has been but recently transferred to the division in which I am acting surgeon. He is from the same place as myself—a small town in northern Ohio. His mother is a widow lady, and has only this one son, and in very moderate circumstances; yet never was a mother who tried harder to bring up her boy in the right way.”

Dr. Jenkins paused in his narrative and turned toward the bed. The sick man moaned and turned uneasily on his pillow, and murmured—

“I see it there again! Why don't you, in mercy, take it away? I can't bear to look at it! the sight will kill me!”

The lady was listening intently, but glanced uneasily toward the dying soldier,

for the surgeon had just informed her he had but little longer to live. She felt a thrill of fear when she heard the sick man's ravings commence again, louder and more frequent. Calling a young man who lay on a cot just outside the door in the hall, a brother soldier, the surgeon directed him to sit by his bed-side, and, if necessary, to hold him if he grew unmanageable.

A long, low, almost unearthly howl, which had something in it of human despair, startled the watchers, under the very window near which they were sitting. It was Brutus, great, shaggy, black Brutus, who had broken his chains and placed himself under the dying man's window, from whence it was impossible to dislodge him; and his howls came at regular intervals, only more frequent. It might well have been compared to the wail of some everlastingly lost soul ascending from the horrors of the burning, bottomless pit.

And placing madam a chair in the cool hall, the surgeon enquired if she was not weary and would like to retire. The lady

replied that after hearing what she had she could not sleep if she were to retire, so she preferred to sit up and hear the conclusion of the story; and, moreover, she might possibly be of service in the sick man's room.

“And,” she added, “Doctor, I have a son, a noble, handsome, darling boy in the Southern army; and but for the mercy of God this might be my own child, lying suffering among strangers, far away from home, and uncared for. You will readily understand my sympathy with that poor sufferer yonder. And besides, I confess to some curiosity to hear the conclusion of the story which you were interrupted in by his frequent ravings.”

The surgeon resumed his story:

“This James Caldwell has been connected with one of the most blood-thirsty villains in Missouri that ever wore the Federal uniform, whose list of atrocities would blanch your cheeks and sicken you were I to enter in its horrible details. Enough, to say, this man Caldwell committed a crime—a deadly crime—and our

authorities permitted him to go unpunished. Madam, I do not, can not blame you Southern people for hating us and shutting your doors upon us. I do not wonder at it at all. I think in many instances we deserve it.

“ This Caldwell, in company with several others of the same command, went out one night, in Missouri, near the town of St. Joseph, and set fire to a man’s house, the man being one of the prominent men in the State, and an influential Rebel citizen. Among them they murdered the whole family, and this man Caldwell, after shooting the man, chopped off his hands with an axe. But his remorse is hurrying him to his grave. It is not the first time he has been sick, and he always in his delirium raves of the ‘ bloody hand,’ and begs to have the man taken out of his sight.

“ There, Madam, is the whole story about which I can not wonder that you looked curious. I would not have entered so largely into the details of this horrible atrocity, only you have been so unexpect-

edly kind that I think this explanation is due to you."

Madam was shocked, as well she might be, for the sick man's screams grew louder and more frequent, until the whole household was startled from their slumbers and came to enquire the cause. The surgeon and madam returned to the sick man's room; but the doctor, the minute his eyes rested upon him, pronounced him dying. He turned his wild, blood-shot eyes blazing with fever full upon the lady, and, thinking it was his mother, implored her to kneel there and pray for him. And madam, casting aside the disgust which had possessed her after re-entering the bed-chamber, knelt and prayed aloud for the soul of him who was passing from earth.

A soft September breeze was blowing and scattering the fading leaves from trees, and the white, wan moonlight was every minute growing more indistinct. In another five minutes a fearful storm had broken over the earth. But far above the hoarse mutterings of thunder was heard

the remorseful screams of the dying soldier, whose crime, that had blackened his life, was following him down into the very gates of eternity. Another despairing wail, one long gasp, while was heard the death-rattle in the throat, and the soul of James Caldwell went to answer for his crime before his Maker.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE END.

WE might write on forever, and the half would scarcely be told; but the dark days of the winter of 1864 are upon us, when General Hood made his unsuccessful raid on Middle Tennessee. We had hoped up to that time—had hoped against hope—but when that failed, and our friends once more were driven from Tennessee, we began to confess within ourselves there seemed but a meagre chance for success. Where we lived, it was a perfect reign of terror, and the Federal authorities exhausted themselves in the catalogue of their atrocities, just as they did when Rosencranz took possession of Murfreesboro, after the evacuation by Bragg. We were not there, but heard every day of something new in the way of atrocities. Every

night for weeks after the advent of the army, you might look out every window in your house and see a burning dwelling, while the Yankees shouted and played their bands. This is an indisputable fact; and moreover, the burning never ceased until General Bragg, who occupied the town of Shelbyville, Tennessee, and which was full of Union people, sent a messenger to General Rosencranz, if he did not stop burning houses in the vicinity of Murfreesboro, he would burn up Shelbyville; and not until then did Rosencranz make any effort to stop it.

One morning, during Hood's raid in Tennessee, we were startled to hear, it seemed all at one time, about twenty axes strike our fence. The snow covered the ground, and was hard frozen, and it was intensely cold. We looked out the window, and the Yankees had fallen to work to dispossess us of our high, thick, plank fence which shut in one side of our lot; but they never stopped until they had gone the entire rounds of the premises, and hauled away our fence in wagons to

assist Father Abraham's soldiers to cook some chickens they had stolen from the citizens. A gentleman who was in the house went out and remonstrated with the captain, for which he was told if he said a word, he would tear down the house, which these valiant warriors were quite capable of doing; for we had seen them, not long before, pull down the Presbyterian church to burn, and many times they burned the graveyard fence, which was sanctioned and approved by those in command. What were they not capable of doing? They were taught in a school which held it no crime to appropriate whatever suited the fancy of these soldiers—to burn the houses, and murder at will innocent women and children, and to drive them out into the pitiless rain and sleet, in the dead hours of night. Still, those who have come among us to live seem astonished that people do not readily affiliate with them, and receive them socially into the sanctity of their own home circles.

Our old friend Major Hart was quite

cured of his Unionism, and was more bitter, finally, in his sentiments than anybody in the neighborhood. The old gentleman was quite subdued, so to speak, and he presented a melancholy appearance; he had scarcely the courage to raise his eyes to the chance passer-by, and you would hardly have recognized the pompous planter in the bowed, dejected form that always met you after the advent of Sherman's army. His Unionism had been a sad failure. When troubles beset him on every side, he began to appreciate the love and sympathy of the devoted wife whose married life had been made so unhappy from the beginning until the present time by his unnecessary hardness and cruelty. He was sorry, too, but when it was too late, of the blight he had cast upon the life of his daughter Marion, and he hesitated not to confess the fact to her. He longed for the return of his son Victor, that he might tell him how sorry he was of the cruel words he had said to him at parting. Thus, how often does repentance come too late.

However, the end was drawing near. The Southern sky was black. Through the murky gloom we could see no ray of sunlight, and on every side was heard only the voice of despair. Smiles in those days came but seldom. Who could smile when everything was on the verge of ruin? The Yankees swarmed in every prominent city of the South. Charleston, the old aristocratic city of the Palmetto State, was trodden by men wearing the national uniform of blue. Richmond, too, the capital of the Confederacy had fallen, and the thunder of General Lee's guns was silent forever. Yes, the gallant old army of the South had fought their last battle, and now they were returning home, ragged and soiled, with two dollars and a half in gold in their pockets, with all lost but honor. And very many of them had no homes to come to, while all their possessions had been scattered to the four winds of heaven.

The fair, effeminate face of Verner Gray was bronzed by continual exposure, while a ruddy flush dyed his cheek, al-

though his step was as proud and buoyant as in the days when he first went to Virginia. Verner came home with the loss of an arm, a reminder of the bloody battle of Gettysburg.

Victor Hart lived through it all; and one quiet morning in Richmond not long after the surrender, there was a marriage in the upper circles of Richmond society. The bride was very handsome, yet quite simply attired in a dress of white French muslin, while her only ornament in her hair was an exquisite cluster of rosebuds. Victor Hart looked supremely contented and happy, and had the pleasure to carry home with him his handsome bride, to whom he had been tenderly attached for several years; and verily was she blessed among women who had the pleasure of calling Victor Hart husband.

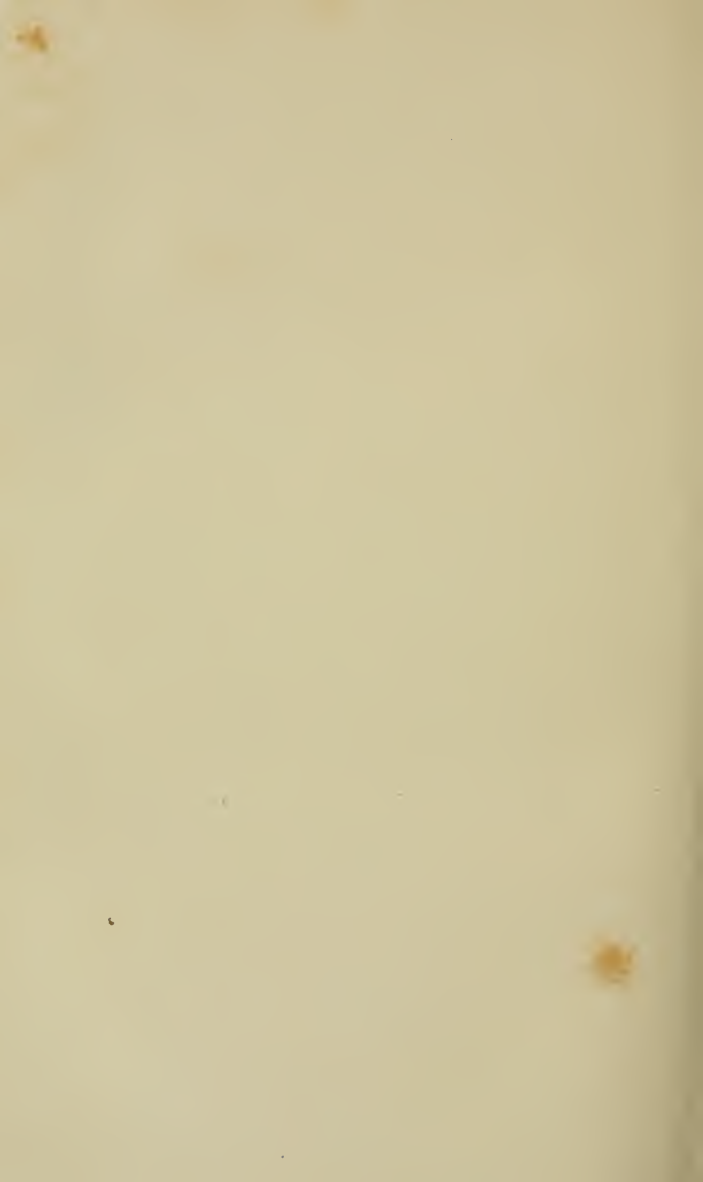
Will Houghton was killed at Fredericksburg, while Will Stanhope came back to old South Carolina with the loss of a leg.

In the deep pine woods of Georgia

there is a lonely grave, above which the midnight moon gleams with ghostly radiance. Every spring-time there comes a woman, clad in sable, trailing garments, and, above the grave of the dead hero, lays a wreath of wild flowers and immortelles. The marble slab bears the simple inscription :

LT. GILBERT ST. MAURICE ;

Aged 26.



BRENDA MERTON.

THE old country farm-house—how pleasant it was in the mellow light of summer! Substantially built of brick that had stood the storms of many winters; with its wide, cool halls, and shady verandas that wooed one to repose when the blazing heat of a summer sun crackled and parched the grounds and fields around. It was the home where I first saw the light of day; and well and tenderly do I love every stone and shrub connected with it. Even the old apple tree with its great wealth of crimson and white blossoms that stood under my window—I can inhale their fragrance even now. The robins came every spring-time, and built their nests in it, and awoke me from my slumbers every morning with a musical reveille; and it seemed every rainy morning they sang louder than ever; or, perhaps it was because the

lulling, musical sound of the "misty drops" wooed me to longer repose on my downy pillow, that their loud twittering disturbed me; and then I would lie, dreamily watching them, where the great, green branches over-shadowed my window, as they hopped from limb to limb, and shook the glittering rain-drops from their plumage.

Dear old tree, and birds, and all, I love you even now!

Away to the right of the old house, you could see the brook that ran leaping and sparkling over the white, pebbled bottom all the year round, and the graceful willows that fringed its banks: it never dried up even in the hottest months of summer, but pursued the even tenor of its way, onward, somewhere to empty its sparkling waters into some other tributary.

Verily, my father's home was the abode of peace and plenty, in my happy childhood. Nowhere was the butter as yellow as that which was brought ice-cold from the old spring-house; nowhere the cream as rich and thick as that which came in

the antique shaped silver cream pitcher daily on my mother's table; and such delicious cakes; and the pickles, and catsups, and other comestibles that all good house-wives used long ago to pride themselves on; for my mother was considered the finest house-keeper in the State, and well she deserved the name. Our ice-house afforded us a bountiful supply all the summer through, and none can so well appreciate the luxury as those who have been accustomed to it.

My mother's table-cloths and napkins were always the freshest, with never a soiled spot on them, her knives polished to the brightness of silver, and her china and glassware shone with the luster that soap and water and a clean linen towel always gave them.

The old antique china, so transparent that you could see the light that came through it with a pale, delicate, rosy glow, had been an heirloom in the family, and my mother prided herself so much on them that at the close of each meal, she seated herself at the table with a huge

white apron covering and protecting the whole front part of her dress, and with a small basin of water, washed and wiped every piece of them with her own delicate hands, and returned them to their own proper place, not daring to trust them in a servant's hands.

Our garden always yielded the finest of strawberries, and when they were gathered early in the morning, with the dew fresh upon them, and piled in great, crimson, luscious heaps, plentifully frosted with snow in the way of loaf sugar, and in the old-fashioned cut-glass bowl in the center of the dining table, flanked on either side by a plate of cake and pitcher of cream, while conspicuous was the elaborately carven silver cake knife, that table was indeed a goodly sight to behold. At least, so thought our summer visitors, who began to fill our rooms from the time that the dust began to thicken on their window sills in their city homes, until the September winds began to blow with a chilliness that reminded them that winter was once more coming.

The old mahogany dining table, dark and rich with age, I can see my mother standing there now, arrayed in her delicate white dress, with lace drapery around the throat and sleeves—my mother always wore white in summer; indeed, no other color would have suited her half so well. How beautiful she was in the days of my childhood, with her brown hair brushed in shining waves from the fair high forehead, in a heavy, graceful coil, and her dress always faultlessly neat, and her house always exquisitely kept. She was the most fastidious person I have ever seen in my life. There was an air of refinement about her that bespoke the finest culture and highest order of intellect; but it never contaminated her to come in contact with persons of less culture and education; she soared far above them, and looked from the heights of her purity and superiority with a species of contempt never outwardly manifested.

My father was a farmer, well born and educated, much given to reading and study, yet never failing in superintending

his well-stocked and well-kept farm, which always yielded a bountiful harvest for his pains. He adored my mother, and never entered into any important speculation without deferring to her. Their devotion to each other was beautiful to behold. They were perfectly congenial to each other, and time had only strengthened the bond of union between them, instead of relapsing into indifference, as many others do after having out-lived the first glamour of the romance of marriage. I have even seen his eyes follow her with a look of indescribable tenderness in them, as she went noiselessly on her round of duties, arranging with her tasteful hand, and putting in order everything that happened to get out of place; for my father was as fastidious as a woman, and my mother had always encouraged it in him, as, indeed, she did in her children, having taught them purposely and intentionally to be so. It was a rule of hers, and every mother would do well to observe it, never to let anything displeasing to the senses come before our eyes; yet she bore with the

waywardness of her children with patience; and by example never failed to conduct them back in their right way of living and acting.

Our family consisted of my father, mother, and four children: one of the children being the daughter of an acquaintance of my mother who had married less fortunately than herself, and chose on her death-bed to send for my mother, and implore her by the memory of their former companionship, to save her infant daughter from being cast upon public charity. She said she could die in peace if she knew her little daughter would be received in the family of my father and mother, whose open-handed generosity was known far and wide.

My mother never did anything without consulting my father, so she went directly home after Mrs. Merton had made the request of her to take her daughter, and called my father from where he was reading on the shaded west end of the piazza. I remember the afternoon perfectly well, and I think it was a volume of Bulwer he

left in the rocking-chair as he arose with alacrity to obey the summons. Why should I not remember it, when it marked an epoch in our lives, and was destined afterward to exert such a powerful influence on my young sister's after-life, and shadow her happiness in the years to come? I was young at the time, but I remember everything as clearly and distinctly as if it had been yesterday; my father sitting on the shaded piazza, reading quietly, yet ever and anon looking up to where my sister and myself were playing on the green plat of smoothly shaven grass, and bestowing upon us the looks of the deepest love and tenderness and sympathy in our childish sports, for my little sister—bless her blue eyes and golden hair!—was only a little over four years of age, and as blithe and winsome a little creature as could be found anywhere.

Every feature of that afternoon is clearly daguerretyped on my memory. The blue sky above; the tall trees swaying in the wind; the sunlight in dancing shadows; the swallows flitting hither and thither;

the tinkling of the cowbells in the distance; even the neighing of the horses in the meadow pasture; and my sister and myself playing so happily on the grass, when the sound of the gate, as it swung to on its hinges, caused us to look around, and my mother came up the graveled walk, dressed in a filmy white lawn, as she always was in summer, with a rose glow in her cheeks caused by the long walk and excitement, and her face beaming under her white straw hat, with its broad, lavender ribbons, which harmonized so admirably with the delicately fair complexion. Even the faithful, honest maid Hannah came with the empty basket, with the folded napkin lying loosely in the bottom, where she had been to carry some dainty, prepared by her own hands for her sick friend; while the great, black, shaggy dog, oddly named Nemesis by some chance visitor, came bounding and barking up the walk. I see them all now, and see my father go with my mother into her own room and remain there for a little time; and then my

happy little sister's doom and misery was sealed for years to come. Very soon they came out from their conference, he with his arm around my mother's waist; and Hannah brought low, cane-seat rockers to the front veranda, and we all sat down, so happy and quiet and contented, and my mother took my little sister, and smoothed her disordered curls, and retied the wide blue sash, and, after kissing her several times, told her she was soon to have another playmate, but a little older than herself.

The blue eyes of the child looked up questioningly, and lisped in the pretty accents of childhood, "Where is the pretty little girl to come from?" and my mother told her that the little girl's mamma was dying, poor little thing! that if some kind lady did not take her, she would have to be carried to the poor-house; that she had no pretty clothes, and no dainty embroidery on her skirts, as my little sister had. But as for the poor-house, the child had no conception of that, and pray God she never may!

The sun sank behind the clouds whose edges were tipped with silver, and a low wind stirred the leaves of the graceful aspen trees with a low, tremulous sigh. Was it a sigh for the blighted life of the unconscious child that nestled so lovingly in its mother's arms? for the long months of keen agony that found no voice?

The tea bell rang—for in those summer days we had tea early, in fact, before the daylight faded—and we all rose and went out to supper, dismissing the thought of the new inmate from our minds until the time should arrive for her to come to our house, which was not to happen until the mother should die; for she had begged that her little daughter might remain with her for the brief period she had to live.

Consumption soon finishes its work; and the poor woman died, one hand clasping my mother's, whom she blessed with latest breath for having promised to take care of her child, and the other holding the hand of her little girl, who gazed with looks of bewilderment in the great, blazing, black eyes on the scene that she could

so little comprehend. The woman's remains were decently put away, and the child, Brenda Merton, was led bitterly crying from her mother's grave in the old country church-yard, and brought and admitted, not as a penniless dependent on my father's charity or made to feel the sting, but to equal rights and privileges of my father's more favored children.

The child, the little Brenda, was tall for her age, and slight, with bold, black eyes that seemed to look you through, and a great mass of waving, curling, black hair that was allowed to flow unconfined on her shoulders. Even at the infantile age she was then, she gave promise of great beauty and character; and a defiant look flashed from her eyes that told one plainly she could be a small fury if opposed in her will. She was plainly and commonly dressed in a striped purple print, with very much worn shoes and stockings, and a small gingham sun-bonnet of a scant pattern, probably the best that the poor, unfortunate, dead wo-

man could procure for her only child, but which was not henceforth to satisfy the craving ambition of the aspiring orphan.

Implanted within her were the seeds of an evil disease, an inordinate love of gaudy plumage, and a hankering after the "purple and fine linen," and the seats of those who sit in high places, which in after years was to exert so powerful an influence on her own character and those with whom she was to be associated.

That first evening of her coming to our happy home I remember but too distinctly. It was the day of the funeral, for both my father and mother had gone to attend it, leaving my little sister, Bertha, and myself at home under the care of the faithful Hannah. We knew where they had gone, for they had told us we might expect the little girl to come home with them; so we often left our play and ran to look down the avenue that led to the public road, scattering boxes and paper men and women with their little families pell-mell in utter confusion on the sitting-room floor, which dear, good Hannah, with not a

touch of impatience in her even voice when she spoke to us, would stoop quietly and restore them to their proper places. How faithfully she performed her duty to my mother's children, year in and year out—not an eye-servant as many of them are.

At last the sound of carriage wheels caused an overthrow of the block houses I was building and trying to amuse my sister with, and we ran hastily down the steps to the gate to meet our parents, with myself nearly consumed with curiosity to see the child who was coming to be a play-mate for us; and even at that moment I can remember feeling a repugnance, amounting almost to aversion, to the child the moment my eyes beheld her. Somehow I felt disappointed; she was not what I expected, yet I do not know that I had a right to feel that way, not having had a description of her—at least, not particularly. I was not prepared to see anyone so plainly dressed—remember, I had only known poverty in the abstract, not in reality—as this poor child who had just seen all she had on earth laid under

the ground. To me, accustomed to the refinements of life and elegance of attire—for it was one of the whims of extravagances of my mother to see that her two daughters were beautifully dressed; therefore, to me this child seemed commonplace and coarse, and looked out of place when she came among us, except the crimson lips, and masses of wavy hair, and bright black eyes. I acknowledge that although she came from her mother's grave orphaned and penniless, demanding my love and sympathy, that I was not in the least attracted towards her; on the contrary, I felt an aversion for which I could not account, and which seemed unreasonable, and I tried to conceal it, for my mother's sake, when I remembered it was through her instrumentality that she came among us.

And while all these thoughts were passing through my mind with the rapidity of lightning, and duty and aversion were struggling together, we reached the house. My father kindly took the wee, brown hands of the child, and introduced

her to myself and sister, and said to me :

“ My daughter, I commend this motherless little girl to your especial care and protection. She is all alone in the world with no one to care for her or love her ; see that she is always treated kindly, and try, yourself, to amuse her ; for had it not been for the kindness of your mothers’s heart, her future might be dreary enough,” looking far in the distance as he spoke.

I answered him that I would do all I could to make her life happy and contented among us. And I answered him truly ; for in that moment I resolved to conquer the aversion that rose in my heart for her, and to be true to my trust and be kind and gentle to the orphan child, and try to make her feel at home among us.

The child scanned me with her bold, bright eyes that never flinched when strangers spoke to her, with a curious look, and at last her restless, roving glances lighted on my little sister ; she took a step forward, with her greedy eyes

fastened on a golden necklace around the child's white throat, and made a motion to snatch it off, saying, in impatient, petulant tones :

“I want that pretty thing! It is gold, and I will have it,” stamping her feet all the while.

My father only smiled in amusement, and thought :

“Poor little thing! I reckon it does look pretty to her; she has been so dwarfed and cramped in her pleasures all her life.”

But a swift shadow passed over my mother's face, as with a single motion of the arm she restrained her; at which the child desisted with a sullen, willful face.

Ah, if that mother could only have shielded her dear little daughter from all the harm that this young orphan child was to bring upon her in after years!

Reader, are you not a believer in blood? And will not impure, tainted blood show itself to the third and fourth generation? And is it not born in children to be good or bad? Granted all this; yet, nevertheless, moral culture helps to eradicate much

of the bad that is transmitted to children through their parents.

The mother of this child had been of gentle birth, and brought up in refined circles of society, or she had not been my mother's friend ; but being of a passionate, self-willed nature, she had, when only sixteen years of age, fallen in love with a handsome young scape-grace, and ran away from a boarding school with him and married. They lived together a good many years in a kind of "hand-to-mouth" way : the man was too indolent and worthless to remain long at any given employment, and when he earned a few dollars he immediately found means to spend them.

The wife helped to eke out a scanty subsistence with her needle, at which she had never been very expert in her life. Of the several children that came to them, not one of them had lived but the little Brenda ; and perhaps it were better that they were removed from such a morally impure atmosphere. Long association with such a corrupt, unprincipled man as

Harwood Merton had blunted the finer sensibilities of her nature, and made her forgetful of her duty—that of early instilling a love of truth and principle in her child's mind.

Ah, if parents could only know of the life-long misery and sometimes *disgrace* that in after years come to their children by not teaching them to speak the truth in their innocent childhood when a young child's mind is so susceptible of lasting impressions! What more detestable thing exists on the face of the earth than an ordinary story teller?

For awhile Harwood Merton was not positively unkind to his wife: he was only lax in principles and morals—that was before he commenced drinking: but when the habit became fully established, a very demon seemed to have taken possession of his soul, and loud and cruel were the blows that descended on the back of his unfortunate wife, and coarse and undeserving were the names that he called her, which she bore with all the fortitude she could.

One stormy night when the thunders roared and the lightnings flashed and the rain poured down in torrents, Harwood Merton came home in a fit of delirium tremens, and died the same night, while the poor helpless woman and wife lay in the bed sick and half crazed with fright. On the following morning, the little Brenda first saw the light of day, while in the same room lay the dead body of her father in full sight of the afflicted wife. Sad, was it not?

My mother related all this to me when I was old enough to understand. Then, is it any wonder that tainted blood will show itself at the offset? If parents would keep their children pure and uncorrupted, let them beware with whom they associate, and who they bring into the intimacy of the fireside circle.

I am going to try to relate how, step by step, this tainted blood showed itself in all the after life and actions of this low-born child, who at an infantile age showed so much greed and avarice. I have always thought, and have never yet had cause to

change my opinion, that birth will tell, and that the traits a child develops in early life will cling to them in all coming years, perhaps not quite so bad, but often they reach a higher degree of refined rascality. The words sound coarse, but forcibly express the truth. Of course, their passions are outwardly held in control as they grow older, which affords them a wider scope for the exercise of the concealed weapons. If a child is a thief in childhood, I would beware how I trusted that child when it became a man or a woman: if addicted to deception in early youth, in maturer age put it far from you, let their education have been what it may; for "can the leopard change his spots?"

But there may be those who say I am advocating a dangerous, specious doctrine. Mind, I do not say that nothing can eradicate the early wrong impressions, but that it would be morally dangerous to trust them; it would be always well to be on our guard; yet much might be accomplished by precept and example, and by a living and reaching after the truth to

remove the errors of false reasoning and teaching.

The morning after the advent of the little Brenda, my mother called me to her room and told she wanted me to accompany her to a neighboring town to purchase some suitable clothing for the little child. I gladly made ready for the trip, which was not more than a mile or so from our house.

We left the two children at play in the front yard, under the care of Hannah, who never seemed out of place, and was the quintessence of goodness and kindness. Little Bertha had generously brought out all of her large family of dolls and doll furniture, and toys, and painted blocks, delighted and amused the little Brenda, who had never in all her life beheld anything so gorgeously beautiful as the large, wax doll, with its moving blue eyes and long, light curls, which my dear little sister, bent upon conferring pleasure, crowded into her arms.

The miniature Miss was attired in a handsome white satin dress, covered with

puffs of illusion, and a broad, blue ribbon sash, tied in large loops at one side, while the crowning glory consisted in a white crape hat with an exquisite wreath of tiny rose-buds extending entirely around it. It had been a present from Santa Claus, and I, old enough to know who Santa Claus was, had sat up into the night with my mother, helping her to dress it. To the orphan child it seemed a perfect fairy; she seemed never to tire looking at it, and my mother resolved she would buy one for her equally as handsome.

When we returned from the town toward dinner time, laden down with bundles of every description, and the child found that the purchases had been expressly for her, her delight knew no bounds. She clapped her wee brown hands, and danced around like something wild. It was well worth while to gratify a taste so perfect and decided as this penniless child evinced; yet the instincts and tastes of a child show themselves early. The little Brenda chose the brightest and showiest of patterns as her especial de-

light, and flew around like something wild.

Hannah exclaimed: "Lord bless the child! Did any body ever see anything like it?"

My mother had certainly purchased liberally and with undisputed taste; for she had intended the child, who henceforth was to be an inmate of her own house and associated with her own daughters, to be equally as well dressed, like the true woman and mother that she was. She did not want the orphan child to feel the sting of dependence, and wanted her to feel that she had a home indeed. Hers was the true nobility of nature, which seeks to avoid wounding the feelings of those whose helplessness leaves them exposed to insult.

As I have said, my mother purchased with an unstinting hand; for the child had literally to be clothed from head to foot, not having in her possession a decent garment in the world, although she aptly showed her appreciation of the "purple and fine linen," metaphorically speaking.

And when the bundles were spread out after the strings and covers were torn from them, with all their treasures displayed before her eyes, as I have said, her delight knew no bounds.

There was a whole piece of linen to be made into aprons, and whole cards of exquisite pearl buttons, and no end to the trimming and the embroidery, and whole pieces of white lawn and delicate muslins with tiny figures in blue and pink and purple, with sashes to match; and one dress, a deep rose-colored muslin, particularly struck her fancy; and then, there was a box of fine white stockings, and slippers with tiny high heels, and lovely little rosettes on them; also, a small parasol lined with pale rose-color, with a carved ivory handle, and a beautiful little fan with a fringed, feathery border. The child never in her life had possessed such treasures. To her, it seemed that she had entered some enchanted domain, resembling the Arabian Nights.

My mother was much gratified by such genuine delight; and I know my father

sympathized with her, and was glad of the ample means which allowed her the indulgence. The child rose suddenly into importance in her own estimation, and in a few days moved and acted as if she had been born and reared in our home and lived there all her life.

Once my mother took her to the churchyard to the grave of her mother, thinking best not to let her entirely forget, and teaching her to respect her mother's memory; but when the child beheld the lonely grave, she drew back with a gesture of impatience and petulance, and said:

“Mama was poor and made me wear ugly clothes, and lived in a mean little house, not pretty like yours; and I don't want to think about it. Come, let us go back to your pretty house, and you shall be my pretty mama now.”

And the child turned flippantly away to contemplate her now fine clothes, and to admire the rosettes on her slippers.

My mother lamented the disposition and the vanity that so early was beginning to show itself. In gentle, winning tones,

she attempted to draw away the child's mind from the study of her new clothes, and to direct her thoughts to the loss of her mother; but she was willful and obstinate, and persisted in saying she did not want to remember anything of her old life.

What a crying sin is ingratitude! and how early did it show itself in the mind of this untaught child! yet there are older people equally as guilty.

My mother employed a poor woman who lived on our place near by, and a neat seamstress she was, to make up the clothes she had purchased, which she did rapidly; and when they were finished and brought home, and the child for the first time dressed in them, she seemed like one transformed. She was superbly handsome in the rose-colored muslin, which had so struck her oriental fancy, with white lace around the neck and sleeves, which she had insisted on putting on, and as usual had her own way—for the rose-color of her dress well matched the carnations in her cheeks, and she bore her hon-

ors regally well, and stepped with the air of a young queen, which amused excessively all of the household.

One day Mrs. Wilmot, an old lady who lived in the neighborhood, was spending the day with my mother. She was a shrewd, practical, far-seeing woman, with good common sense and plenty of experience in the world in her dealings with people. She had not lived so long for nothing; and her cold, searching eyes, with a metallic glitter in them, sought and found out all that was worth knowing about those with whom she came in contact. The old lady had had many a tough battle with life, and generally bore flying colors from the field, while her quick insight into character was hardly ever at fault. An unerring instinct and a keen perception kept her well informed as to the gold that was mixed with dross—unlike my mother, who was ever willing to forgive the bad in people and seek the salient points in one's character and bring them out in relief.

My dear mother! she always looked on

the sunny side of life, with her heavenly faith in the belief that there's "good in all and none all good."

I remember perfectly well that hazy summer afternoon; dinner was over, and the servants had cleared away the table and gone about their business, and all was quiet in the house. The two children, Bertha and Brenda, had taken their dolls under the shade of a large sycamore tree, where Hannah had spread a large piece of faded carpet to protect their white dresses from the grass, and she had retired a short distance off in a low chair, with some sewing in her lap, for Hannah was very handy, and sewed as neatly as anyone you ever saw. I think she was sewing some trimming on a coquettish little muslin apron for the orphan, tacking some bows of pink ribbon on the little square pockets which were bordered with lace.

I think sometimes now that my mother ought to have seen the growing vanity of the child, and her better judgment should have told her that she was doing wrong to thus pamper to the cravings and tastes

of a spoiled child who would illy brook denial to anything she ardently wished for; for ever since the wayward feet of the little Brenda had crossed our threshold, she had had her own way. The rest of us had been used to obedience, and we wondered how any of them could be so affected by her imperious ways.

But I was going on to describe the appearance of our household on the day that Mrs. Wilmot made her visit there.

I had taken a pretty book of tales on the back piazza, which was over-run with creeping vines and purple and white morning glories, forming a dense, cool shade from the burning August sun, and, sitting on a low, light rocker, soon lost myself in the delights of Cinderella and the glass slipper—they always held me with a species of enchantment—and I had just arrived at the place where she had met the prince and was hurrying away from the ball when the clock was striking twelve and her finery was turning to rags, when I was arrested by the sound of my mother's and Mrs. Wilmot's voices

from the adjoining room, used as a sitting-room, and peculiarly adapted to summer uses on account of the cool, quiet seclusion of the place—just the place for a comfortable, cozy chat with a friend on a hot summer afternoon, where, if so disposed, one could loosen the hair and don a wrapper without fear of interruption.

I caught the sound of little Brenda's name, and confess to some curiosity as to what was coming next. It may have been wrong in me to have stayed and listened when I am sure my mother thought there was no one in hearing; but older people have done as much when more important subjects than the orphan child were the theme. I was only a child then, and felt a great curiosity as to what they were going to say, and to hear what our visitor thought of the little girl whom she had met several times at our house.

She, Mrs. Wilmot, spoke in her forcible, determined tones, and I fancied I could almost see the sharp flash of the steely blue eye as she spoke:

“Mrs. Marston, are you aware of the

great wrong you are doing to Lucy Merton's child? In my estimation, you are committing a grievous sin."

I can fancy the old lady laying down her work, crossing her hands on her lap, and gazing steadily at my mother; for she never hesitated to unbosom herself on any occasion, and generally denounced in sweeping terms anything so unfortunate as to cause her disapprobation.

My mother's tones came low and clear, and I can fancy, too, that a shadow crossed her face.

"In what way, if you please, Mrs. Wilmot? Be good enough to point it out to me. I do not think I understand you."

"It is this;" and the old lady delivered herself with emphasis, "you have taken the child, Brenda Merton, from a life of poverty and toil, where her mother scarcely obtained enough to keep soul and body together, and where she has been stinted and half-starved all the years of her young life; you have brought her here and suddenly elevated her to the equal rights and privileges of your own daughters."

“Well, I want to know how that is going to harm her? The child has decided tastes for one so young and who has seen so little.”

“Don't you see,” snapped the old lady, “that you are placing her far above her social position? and after you educate her she is going to despise everybody that is not as well dressed and educated as herself? I can see it growing on her now. Why, the child is as vain as a peacock who struts so proudly among the barnyard fowls until he looks down disgustingly at his coarse feet and ungainly legs;” and the old lady laughed at her own idea.

“So it is going to be with that child that you have been so good as to keep out of the poor-house; she is now mighty proud of her fine clothes, but when she grows up, and some spiteful school child throws up to her where she came from and how her vagabond father died in a fit of delirium tremens the night before she was born, and was buried by public charity; then she will feel somewhat lowered in her own estimation. You may mark

my words, some of them will be kind enough to remind her of it; and then don't you think her fine plumage will fall? Can't you see how scornfully she looks down on the neighborhood children at the Sunday-school?"

For we had a chapel, and there was service every Sabbath morning and Sunday-school in the afternoon.

"No," my mother replied; I have seen nothing of the kind; indeed, I have not given the subject a thought."

"Well, I have," rejoined old Mrs. Wilmot. "Last Sunday—you know I always go to Sunday-school except on rainy, bad days—I saw this little Brenda Merton, who would be far more at home in a poor-house"—the old lady could not divest herself of the idea that the child would be better off in a poor-house—"draw in the ruffled skirts of her silk dress—silk!"—the old lady repeated scornfully; "the idea of you giving a pauper child silk is ridiculous—when some of the plainer dressed girls were getting a seat by her. It made me furious to see the airs she put

on, as if everybody did not know where she came from."

Mrs. Wilmot was right about the child Brenda having on the silk dress, beautifully ruffled to the waist. My mother had bought and had made for her a small checked, crimson and white summer silk, not very expensive after all, but very stylish when made up. Each of us, my little sister and myself, had one, and the child admired them so intensely that my mother, with a native generosity of heart which has always distinguished her, determined to get the orphan one too. This same silk which Mrs. Wilmot held in such contempt, was the special delight of the child; and I do not think that a born empress could have moved with any more stately step than this proud, pauper child, who, with a single, frosted, crimson rose, with dark, shining green leaves that sparkled like dew drops, on the front of her white straw hat, with long ends of handsome, broad, white ribbon resting on the floating, waving, black hair, so scornfully drew in the ruffled skirts of the con-

demned silk on the Sunday to which Mrs. Wilmot alluded.

I had seen the disdain which excited the direful wrath of the old lady, and commented on it to myself. Now, since I have thought of it, I remember the sharp looks she gave the child, as if she would like to have administered a sound boxing on the small, brown, shell-shaped ears. I do not think I ever forgot anything in my life, and it seems that everything connected with the orphan had indelibly impressed itself on my memory.

My mother had replied to the tirade about the silk that "the child had seemed to covet such things, and to afford pleasure she had bought them, never thinking of harm."

"And for that very reason, the coveting you spoke of, you should not have given them to her. You should have let her gone without them, and taught her a lesson of self-denial. Do you suppose you will always be able to keep her so well-dressed? Who knows what may happen to you in after years? You may

not be so prosperous as you are now. I know what you are thinking," the old lady went on to say; "but I intend to do my duty. You are thinking to yourself that it is none of my business; but I have not yet told you all that I intended to. The things which I have spoken of are the least objectionable. That child's father once committed a theft; true, the amount was not large, but the crime was none the less hateful."

"Well," asked my mother, "how, I would like to know, is that going to affect the child whom you seem to have cultivated such an aversion for?"

My mother spoke quite seriously. I knew she was thinking deeply from the inflection of her voice.

"In this way." Old Mrs. Wilmot delivered herself in short jerking accents. "Bad blood always shows itself in some way or other; and when the parents are tainted, it generally comes out in the children, unto the third and fourth generations. You remember you sent Myrtle" — I held my breath when my own name

was called, and was wondering what would come next—"with Hannah and little Brenda to my house one evening for some leaven to make light rolls—and you know I always have the lightest and foamiest of anybody in the neighborhood. Well, I got the leaven and wrapped it up in a paper, and gave it to Hannah. Well, I happened to think of some nice light tea-cakes in the pantry that Betty had made that morning, and I went out to get some for the children, and as I was coming back into the room, I saw this pet of yours slyly lift something from the corner of the table near where she was sitting—Hannah stood not far off—and I saw her hide it under the corner of her linen apron;" and the old lady jerked out the word "linen" with a spiteful emphasis that made me smile where I was sitting. "But Hannah, who is quick-sighted, saw it too, and quickly reaching forth her hand, took it from her and restored the article to the table, as she thought, unseen by me. It was my little silver fruit knife that my little granddaughter had sent me from the city last

Christmas, and I had been peeling and eating some peaches just before the children came, and I had laid it on the table just before you came. I wonder Hannah never told you."

My mother, as might be supposed, was slightly shaken, but did not seem to attach as much importance to it as old Mrs. Wilmot evidently had thought she would, and it seemed to irritate her very much.

So she replied to the old lady :

"I think we will bring her up so that her first impressions will be forgotten by the time she is grown. At any rate I am going to discharge my duty by her ; and I think if some of our people who talk and write so much, and in such high-flown strains about the 'benighted heathen' would seek out some child from among '*les miserables*,' and teach and point out the way of duty, they would feel all the better for it."

"Yes, and bring under your own roof, among your own pure daughters, a thief and the daughter of a thief. I acknowledge I do not see the duty that lies in that

line. It is all very well to talk about the 'charity that begins at home,' but I would look long before I would receive a thief in my household."

The old lady spoke warmly, and I knew she felt every word she said.

"I am sorry, Mrs. Wilmot, that you seem so much prejudiced against the child. I know she is full of faults, and not at all times as obedient as she ought to be, but I am going to do my best, and see if I can not prove to you that example will do much towards correcting early wrong impressions."

"And much reward will you get for your pains! I tell you, the child is sly, as sly as an ape; and mind if you do not some day live to remember my words. If there is anything I hate, it is a sly child, and a sly child will make a sly woman."

My father's footsteps sounded on the front piazza, and that put an end to the conversation; and shortly afterwards, Mrs. Wilmot took her leave, promising to call again at an early day.

I watched my mother narrowly at the

tea-table, and I think her face was a trifle paler, and the almost prophetic warning of old Mrs. Wilmot caused the shadow on her face; and I think now, and have always thought, that she was thinking, when she sat so serenely smiling and talking so pleasantly at the table, that perhaps she had done an unwise thing in bringing this child into her family; and I also know that whatever may have been her thoughts at that time, that she was resolved that, come whatever might, she would discharge her duty and make herself worthy of the trust that the child's dead mother saw fit to repose in her.

I remember my father asking her what made her look "so thoughtful," and she had answered, "Oh, I am thinking of a good many things," and then the conversation had drifted into pleasant topics, and my father laughed and jested with the little girls and asked them how many new doll dresses they had made that afternoon, and how many hats and mantles and sacques the miniature misses possessed, and who, *a la* Flora McFlimsy, had

scarcely anything to wear. I was thinking all the time of what Mrs. Wilmot had said about the child's stealing, and I think the thought staggered my mother too, for she remembered how the little Brenda had clutched at my little sister's necklace the first evening of her coming to our home.

That night the little orphan was in high good humor, and very talkative, for the child was a perfect little enthusiast when pleased, or anything struck her fancy; she was discoursing largely on the "doll wedding" that was to come off on the following day, and was going to send over for some little girls who lived just in sight, and have them, too, to bring their dolls. On the whole, they were to have a grand time of it.

Little Brenda had eaten very bountifully of cake that was left from dessert at dinner, and when she asked to be helped again, my mother told her very kindly and firmly that she had eaten enough, the child flew into a perfect passion of tears, and called my mother an "old, mean,

stingy thing," and in her blind anger started up from the table.

A flush dyed my mother's usually calm cheek, but she bade her keep her seat at the table, and then Brenda relapsed into sullen silence, refusing to answer when spoken to; neither did she, until her fit of ill humor passed away; and then I knew my mother was thinking of old Mrs. Wilmot's words concerning the entire family whom she declared to be "evil, root, branch and stock."

In after years that warning came back to her, but when too late.

My little sister Bertha—I do not think I ever described her to you: her eyes were of the deepest blue, large and clear, and her hair of a pale, golden yellow, almost the color of ripe corn-silks; she was in every sense of the word an exquisite beauty, and gave promise, too, of a good mind. As a child, she was submissive and easily governed, and was a very sunbeam in our household; yet she always gave up to the imperious little pauper.

It may sound out of place, but I have

always felt like calling her that since that conversation between my mother and old Mrs. Wilmot, when I sat and listened to her on the shaded piazza, hidden from sight ; the words rise to my lips whenever a thought of the child comes into my mind.

Brenda ruled my darling little sister with a rod of iron, save when I was by to take her part ; and several times I had gone to my mother with a tale of my grievances.

If the child, Brenda, wanted anything that my little sister had, she unceremoniously appropriated it without leave or license, and making no apology. As I have said, I went to my mother with our disturbances ; but it only seemed to make her feel badly, and at last I resolved to watch her narrowly myself and make no one any wiser for the information. Truly was Mrs. Wilmot right in saying the child was "sly," for she seemed possessed of the cunning and subtlety of a serpent. As she grew older—and age is in experience and not in years—she no longer in-

dulged in passionate out-breaks, and insisting in that imperious manner for her own way. With the consummate tact of a skillful general, she manœuvred and gained her ends in that way—by deception. Why, the child would tell the most bare-faced, shameless falsehoods with unblushing effrontery. I, for one, grew never to believe a word she said, unless I knew from other sources she was telling the truth. It hurt my mother deeply, and with her she remonstrated all in vain. It was born in her surely or she could not have been so addicted to it in so short a time. If Brenda broke or lost anything; if she happened to do any little thing that failed to meet with approbation, she would positively and flatly deny it in the presence of a nation.

Now, I had always had a holy horror of lying, and had been taught to consider it as a crying sin in the sight of Heaven; and for me and my pure-hearted, guileless little sister to be daily associated with a common liar was too bad.

Many and many a time have I seen her

do things calculated to call forth the disapproval of my parents, and this unblushing child of sin would pronounce my sister the author of the mischief, which made me grow daily to dislike her more and more; and if my mother could have recalled the past, she would have unhesitatingly done so, and left her in her mother's care to be looked after by the county.

At school she committed some grave offenses and always attempted to lay the blame on my sister; but the teacher, who had sharp eyes, soon discovered the real offender, and more than once exposed her to public disgrace.

Brenda Merton was growing up splendidly beautiful, and as haughty as a princess. People would often turn to look at her, with looks of deepest admiration, which she received as if she had been to the "manor born."

She studied well, too; and if her moral nature had kept pace with her physical beauty, she would have made a superb woman.

At sixteen she was tall and well devel-

oped in every way; more so than many girls of the ages of nineteen and twenty. If there was one thing in the world that this wayward child dearly loved, it was to create a "sensation"—to take people by storm—and I know now that the sole thought of this ambitious "pauper" was to make a brilliant match. She quite disdained the company of the neighboring gentlemen, unless, indeed, those whose lives have been spent in foreign colleges, and drove fast horses, and drank wine, and played fast and loose with woman's hearts.

My sister Bertha quite sank into insignificance before this brilliant, scheming girl; yet my sister was as pure and beautiful as a lily.

Thus the years passed on: and amid the trials and troubles consequent on school life, the time arrived for them both to graduate, which they did with much honor to themselves. After graduating, they took their places in society, the one to rule right regally and seek for admiration, the other as fair and pure as a lily,

and as modest as a daisy, waiting to be sought.

Our neighborhood that summer was very gay. Where we lived it was thickly settled, and plenty of young gentlemen and ladies enough to make merriment. We had picnics and amateur theatricals, and every species of amusement that could be invented, and Brenda Merton, under the patronage of my father and mother, was the queen of them all—the leading, moving spirit.

In company she pretended to love my sister—I had almost written the word *little*, for it did seem strange to me to think of us all as grown young ladies, receiving the attentions of gentlemen—yet in my heart I knew Brenda hated my sister for her pure, refined, exalted nature and beauty, which had the faculty of retaining hearts where her gorgeous, tropical style failed; which reminded one of the effervescence of champagne: the sparkle was soon over, and only a flat, insipid taste remained.

In one particular instance—for I, with

my old dislike and distrust revived, by the almost prophetic admonition of old Mrs. Wilmot, who had long ago been gathered to her fathers, watched, or at least thought I was watching her all the time; yet with all my carefulness the girl continued to do much mischief unawares; for what can not a sly woman do?

We, my sister and myself, whose feet had never strayed from the paths of right and duty, were but an indifferent match for the girl so skillful in the use of the weapons with which she stabbed in the dark; and I know, too, that this same Brenda Merton, who had slept under our roof from her orphaned childhood, and been nursed and tended as a daughter of the house, hated me; for I think she knew that I suspected her of duplicity. I have seen her bend her black eyes on me with a look of keen questioning, as if she would read my very soul.

To confess the truth, my mother had become heartily tired of her long ago; and Brenda had given her a great deal of trouble, and but illy repaid the kindness

that had given her, in every sense of that suggestive word, a home. With a shameless disregard of my mother's wishes, Brenda Merton did exactly as she pleased, when, and where, and how she pleased, on all occasions. She, the pauper child, consulted her own tastes and pleasures in everything that pertained to our household.

What could my mother do? turn the girl into the world without home or shelter? No; she could not do that cruel thing, as she had but few ideas of earning her own living. She had but little appreciation of anything save a sensuous love of indolence and luxurious ease. So my mother kept thinking that perhaps marriage would some day relieve her of what had now become to her a heavy, tiresome burden.

And right here let me say, if I had had my way, I should have packed her off anywhere, so we were freed from her; and she might have eked out a scanty subsistence as best she might, as she ate her daily bread with so much ingratitude.

I have but little sympathy for those who know their duty, and do not do it—little sympathy for those who cannot accord respect for those who opened their hearts and purses to keep the “wolf from their doors.” Yes, I would have cast her adrift in the world to have got her living in any way that came to hand.

There was to be a masked ball in the neighboring town, and we had all received invitations. Everybody knows what a peculiar fascination there is in masked balls, when characters of every age and clime are seen whirling in the dance in a gay, wild, mad, rollicking gallop, in motley confusion; where fierce looking brigands in black velvet caps and slashed doublets make love to fair, stately Greek maidens, with their hair twisted in classical coils, looking as cold and pure as Northern snows; and princes “trip the light fantastic toe” with dark-browed Italian peasant girls, arrayed in laced velvet bodices and short crimson skirts, and forget themselves in the intoxicating waltz.

Our father thought—and he was right—

such things dangerous to the morality and purity of fresh young girls just entering on the untried paths of womanhood, untouched by dissipation of any kind.

Such things delighted the heart of Brenda Merton more than anything else in the world, and she begged hard to be allowed to go, while my father and mother would not hear of such a thing. As for my sister and myself, we had no desire for anything of the kind, and more especially a masked ball in a public hall where a promiscuous crowd was of course expected.

Yet there are parents who blindly and thoughtlessly permit their pure, innocent young daughters, whose reputation should be guarded as a pearl of priceless value, to attend these mixed assemblages with reckless, unprincipled young men who love "women and wine;" and sometimes they have cause to regret it.

Brenda Merton, true to the instincts of her childhood, determined on a plan of escape without our knowledge at the time.

I must mention here, that my mother

had in her possession an old-fashioned, valuable necklace composed of emeralds, and it had a peculiarly devised fastening. It had been a wedding gift from my father, and was highly prized on that account. It lay loosely in a jewelry casket, with many other handsome things, in the top drawer of my mother's bureau.

About a week or more previous to the masked ball, the necklace had disappeared. The strictest search was made, and the missing necklace was the topic of conversation for several days ; but no light was thrown on the subject. The house servants had been brought up under my mother's instructions, and were regarded by us all as truthful and honest, there being nothing to fix the theft on anyone ; so the subject of the missing valuable was dropped for a time to be revived in a very peculiar manner.

But, however, all in good time.

I think I had commenced to tell you of the way Brenda had determined, with all her love of adventure and mystery, to find her way to the masked ball, which

knowledge we became possessed of subsequently.

She frequently walked to town alone—it was not much over a mile—and on this occasion she went several times, ostensibly to attend to the fitting and making of a handsome new dress my mother had but recently given her—sometimes for one thing, sometimes for another: now to match the shade of a ribbon, about which she was remarkably fastidious, again to have her curls newly brushed, or for a late magazine which always brought her pleasure. She found every excuse she could for making frequent visits to the town, never soliciting company on her self-appointed excursions.

Brenda had a good many school acquaintances in the town who professed a world of devotion for her, yet they usually belonged to that type of young ladies denominated “fast girls,” which is certainly no compliment to anyone. With her friends she frequently spent the day, and although my mother did not at all approve of the intimacy, it seemed im-

possible to find any means of preventing it.

All the time she was preparing her costume for the masked ball which she was bent on attending. You will observe that her friends, as might have been expected, were not very punctilious in their notions according to their code of honor, and they thought it would be an excellent joke to dance at the *bal masque* without my parent's knowledge.

So, thanks to the indefatigable labor and energy which could work when aroused, she finished her masque dress in time and left it at the house of a friend.

I learned all this afterwards from one who no longer cared, now that the *denouement* was over.

The evening of the ball I remember perfectly well. A warm, bright, sunshiny September day drew to a close, and a chilly wind arose, sweeping the faded rose-leaves from the bushes, and scattering them across the lawn. At the tea-table we sat and conversed pleasantly of the events of the day. My father had been

all day superintending the gathering of apples for winter use. It had been a fine year, and load after load of great, mellow, shining, rosy-cheeked apples, gave one pleasant visions of long bright winter evenings, when comfortably housed from the driving snow and sleet, we would draw nearer to the great wood fires that blazed and crackled on the hearth, sending its incense heavenward, and with books in hand and apples and nuts within reach, we would dream away the long winter hours. My mother had been pickling and preserving, for which she was famous. My sister Bertha had been making some warm flannel sacques for an old negro woman who had onced nursed her, but now was helpless. We had all been both pleasantly and profitably employed. As for myself I had been reading all day, for I was something of an idle dreamer, and oftentimes lived in a world of my own imagination, peopled with exquisite images of my own fancying. All had been in some way contentedly engaged except Brenda, who had seemed moody and abstracted all the day,

singing fitful snatches of old-time melodies, and going from one thing to another, never occupied for more than a few minutes in anything.

At table, the masque ball was incidentally spoken of, but nothing of note said about it.

After tea Bertha betook herself to the sitting-room, and, comfortably arrayed in dressing-gown and slippers, soon lost herself in the pages of a fascinating book which "Jim," our little black mail-carrier, had brought out from town, presented by some one of her many gentlemen friends. Father came in to keep her company and look over his new papers. I merely stopped at the door to look in on them so cosily seated before the blazing hearth, which the increasing chilliness of the evening rendered quite indispensable. I was on my way to my mother's room, where she had asked me to come and assist her in putting away some clean ironed clothes, which Hannah had deposited in a huge flat basket just as the bell announced tea.

In that pleasant, bright room, chatting with my mother about various things, listening to the story of her success in her pickles, preserves, etc., I never once thought of Brenda Merton, who had gone to her own room immediately after supper and locked the door, declaring she had one of her terrible headaches, after having procured from my mother a clean linen bandage with hartshorn and camphor, tied it on in our presence, and excused herself for the evening, and faithful Hannah followed her to her room with a warm foot-bath, with an injunction to get into bed as quickly as possible, as sleep was the most effectual mode of getting rid of a nervous headache.

You may think I am entering too largely into particulars, but I am trying faithfully to recall every feature of that particular evening. I am not drawing on the imagination, but painting facts from real life. Moreover, I am trying mainly to show you the depths of depravity and treachery that this girl's nature had reached.

The evening among ourselves had

passed quietly and happily. Brenda had sent down word by Hannah that she had felt better after having bathed her feet, and that she felt like she could sleep, and begged that she might not be disturbed. Hannah had undressed her and seen all preparations made for retiring, so we did not disturb her, and by ten o'clock everything in our house was quiet and soon soundly sleeping.

I think it was between one and two o'clock that I awoke with the most terrific sounds of thunder and lightnings that I had ever heard in my life. The oldest inhabitants could not remember to have witnessed anything like it. The rain came down in torrents, and great sheets of water covered the lawn in a few minutes. I lay awake a long time, listening to the storm and the tall trees swaying in the September blasts, but Bertha slept on, all unconscious of the fury of the elements that rocked our house and made the windows rattle.

A half an hour later its fury was spent, and a regular steady rain commenced

falling, which lasted until daylight. While lying there in the silence and darkness of the night, listening to the ceaseless patter of the rain, it may have been fancy or not, but I distinctly heard, or thought I heard, the sound of voices on the front lawn, the opening and shutting of gates, and then I thought I heard a light step pass my door, and then all was still again. My mother's room was in the rear of the house, and mine a front room up-stairs. I arose softly and looked out of the front window, where the servant had forgotten to close the blinds, but could see nothing but the swaying of the branches of the old apple tree, as anon the winds bent them before my window.

I went back to bed and in a few minutes more was sound asleep, and never woke any more until a servant came in the morning and announced that breakfast was ready. A chilly September rain was still falling, and it was quite cold indeed. I had a confused recollection of the occurrences of the previous night, but now I could not tell whether I had

dreamed it or not. I arose hastily and dressed myself, and in place of the light muslin that I had worn the previous evening, I put on a warm, comfortable blue cashmere.

It seems that my sister had risen early and had been with my father on the front piazza, viewing the ravages of the storm. They both greeted me with a pleasant "Good-morning!" From the rosy blush in Bertha's cheeks, one could see that her slumbers had been undisturbed.

My father said to me pleasantly:

"It seems, my daughter, you are not the only laggard this morning," as we gathered around the breakfast table; "Brenda has not yet made her appearance."

My mother explained that on account of the headache of the previous evening she had directed the servants not to waken her, thinking, perhaps, she may have lost some rest on account of the storm.

"I knocked lightly at her door as I came down," remarked Bertha, "but she was sleeping, I suppose, and I came away.

Mamma, don't you think Hannah had better go up now and see how she is, and we will send her breakfast to her room. I will arrange a tray myself."

Dear, kind sister! always so thoughtful of other people's comfort!

So Bertha busied herself in spreading a clean white napkin on a small breakfast waiter, and on it placed a tempting breakfast for an invalid, consisting of toast, light waffles and biscuit, and a bit of broiled ham, and a cup of rich yellow coffee, for Brenda detested tea and would never drink it on any occasion. On a small extra saucer she had placed an additional lump of sugar, and directed Hannah to carry it to Brenda's room.

In a few minutes that faithful domestic returned with an appearance of the greatest consternation, and sat down the tray containing the breakfast in an excited manner. We all looked inquiringly.

"O mistress," began Hannah, "you had better go to Miss Brenda's room; she is mighty sick. I knocked at her door, but she did not answer, so I made bold to

open it, and looked in, and there lay Miss Brenda on the bed with a burning hot fever, throwing her arms about like something wild, and muttering and talking about all sorts of things that I could not understand; and the room is all tumbled up—you just never saw such a place!”

My mother arose instantly, and I followed her. Sure enough, Hannah had told the truth, you never saw such a place; and Brenda was in the wildest delirium, and talking, as Hannah had said, about things we did not understand; but from snatches I caught the words, “star of evening,” “fifteenth century,” “Greek maiden,” “Captain Stanford,” while she spoke hurriedly and excitedly.

It all flashed over me in a moment: Brenda had stolen away and been to the masque ball, and returning home had been caught in a storm. Her headache had all been a sham, and gotten up for the occasion to facilitate her flight. And then I remembered the sound of the voices on the front lawn, the opening and shutting of gates, and the light footsteps

past my door, and I knew then that I had not been dreaming. As if in confirmation of my surmises, there lay her gray shawl with its crimson border on a chair near by the bed, hastily thrown down, and the water was dripping to the floor, and stood in pools by her bed; her light kid walking boots were soaked through and through, and there was mud on her wet, dragged skirts.

It seemed she had barely presence enough of mind to get herself undressed and in bed, without trying to remove the traces of her indiscretion. Her midnight soaking had given her an intense cold, and made her quite hoarse, which by morning had resulted in a burning fever, while she murmured on incoherently about the ball, and the long walk home, and the storm that had overtaken them in the woods.

My father promptly dispatched "Jim" for a physician, and he soon arrived and gave her an opiate which caused her to fall into a deep sound slumber.

It was weeks before she was well again,

and then it all came out: the frequent visits to town to get up her ball costume, which was done at the house of a friend; she had worn a crimson silk skirt as a "peasant girl," with black velvet boddice, laced front and back, and thickly studded with silver stars; the skirt just reached to her knees, with full trowsers of silk, silken hose, and white satin slippers with crimson rosettes; her long wavy hair floating loosely over her shoulders from her small velvet cap, encircled by its wreath of silver stars, and a long black feather gracefully drooping on one side. I should like to have seen her, for I know she enjoyed it; for if there was one thing in the world she dearly enjoyed, it was to create a sensation and be admired by gentlemen. Such amusements suited her craving, passionate nature, but the penalty she paid was a dear one.

I think the only thing that made my mother less harsh in her rebukes, was that in her wild words of delirium, there seemed to be an under current which showed that she felt badly about running

away and deceiving my mother. She seemed to have done something which she was sorry for, but we could not make out what it was. We only caught the words, "I wish she could get it back." What? We all asked, but there the matter dropped, and she was soon talking about something else.

It appears that Captain Stanford was one of the young gentlemen who helped to get up the ball, and that he knew my father, and held him in great respect. He also knew Miss Merton by sight, and was surprised to see her there without any *chaperone*; and when the ball began to break up he saw a notoriously worthless young man making his way towards her with the purpose of escorting her home. Captain Stanford had heard among the young men that Miss Merton had left home without the knowledge of her friends, and felt some compassion for the wayward girl, and he did not think it safe for her to take the long lonely walk through the wood with such a reckless man. So he had begged some one to in-

introduce him, and he, Captain Stanford, had insisted on accompanying her home; and it seems that on the way he had read the wayward girl a pretty severe lecture on her imprudence in coming from home that way. Through respect for my father and pity for her youth and inexperience, he had brought her home and been overtaken by the storm in the wood.

The escapade created some little excitement in the town and neighborhood, and fast young men of loose morals swore she was "game to the last."

Finally the affair died out in the neighborhood, and was set down as the result of inexperienced youth, and a wild girl's giddy thoughtlessness.

My parents lectured her more severely than they had ever done before, and for the future she promised to do better. I think she really did feel some qualms of conscience when she saw how much my father and mother were grieved, but it was destined to be of short duration. You could see the tainted blood that ran through her veins showing itself in all she

said and did, not being much improved by cultivation or association.

One thing touched me. Once, during Brenda's confinement to her sick bed, my mother called my sister and myself to her and put her arms around us both and laying her head on my shoulder, wept softly. Bertha, in great distress, inquired the cause, and my mother replied :

“O my daughters! but for the great mercy of God, it might have been one of you so lost to all sense of shame and honor! I am blessed, indeed, in my own dear daughters; for you never disobey me, never grieve and distress me by your waywardness, as this poor unfortunate child has done.”

We kissed her tenderly, and resolved that we would always be true to ourselves and never betray the kind affection that always had encircled us.

After my parents had pointed out to her and showed her the consequences of her folly and imprudence, and she had promised never again to offend, they never again alluded to the affair, and

made a point of not permitting any member of our household to speak on the subject; but the repentance was destined to be of brief duration. In fact, Brenda was only waiting for the next opportunity, when she would again prove how she possessed the wisdom and cunning of a serpent, perhaps, with more of subtlety than wisdom, more of recklessness than judgment.

My sister Bertha was considered exquisitely beautiful, with her deep blue eyes and golden hair, and pale, pure loveliness, which won all hearts; yet she was not devoid of spirit or animation; only she waited to be sought, never obtruding herself on the notice of others.

My sister, during a recent visit to a neighboring city, had met a young gentleman who had fallen deeply in love with her, Gerald Whitworth by name. He was the son of a wealthy banker, and also a young lawyer of brilliant promise. Be that neither here nor there. My sister returned his love, and never thought of the many thousands that report said he

would heir. She loved him for himself alone, and he adored her. He was coming in our neighborhood to spend a month, being almost exhausted by excessive hard work at the bar. My father knew his family well, so no objections were offered to the engagement. When it became known to Brenda Merton, she offered her congratulations with a beaming smile, but inwardly resolved to win him for herself. He was just the style of young gentleman she most admired, being tall and commanding in person, with splendid form, a high, broad brow, shaded by masses of heavy brown hair, and deep hazel eyes that could look unutterable things when their owner choose. He had also a perfect passion for music, and he played and sang finely. Added to all these outward personal attractions, he possessed the key that unlocks the fairy portals of society, namely, a splendid position and great wealth.

Brenda thought it would be an excellent joke for her, the child of poverty and low birth, to win from his allegiance the

handsome, gracious lover of my sister; for Brenda had learned long ere this of her obscure parentage. Just as Mrs. Wilmot, who now slept in her grave, had predicted, when in ruffled dresses and linen aprons, the school children she treated so disdainfully, gathered together to partake of their dinners, and she had ground her teeth in rage, and sparks of anger and passion flashed from her black eyes, while Bertha—dear sister!—had said:

“For shame girls! how could you talk so to an orphaned child? My mother would be so much grieved if she could hear you.”

To which they replied:

“Well, then, let her learn to know her place and not take on so many airs over us. I would like to know what would have become of her if your father and mother had not picked her up and put a shelter over her head and clothed and fed her? If my father had died in a drunken fit, I would lie low and keep silent.”

And with this sarcastic, parting-fling, the school girls, who had finished their din-

ners, went to their respective play-houses, feeling rejoiced that they had been able to "put down that proud, stuck-up Brenda Merton."

I had been an amused auditor of the conversation, and we all know that school girls will say spiteful things when they become offended at one another; and if anyone's grand-father, or uncle, or any other relative has been so indiscreet as to have committed an error at any period of their lives, these same prowling birds of prey swooped down on the unfortunate living descendants, and held up for inspection the crimes and sins of their ancestors.

Old Mrs. Wilmot—at rest with the world—was right. Her predictions in regard to the unfortunate orphan had been verified to the letter; and now, how many times the conversation floated back, when I saw the traits of character which she had declared to my mother on that summer afternoon undeveloped, coming to the surface. My old dislike and distrust had never been conquered, and every subsequent event helped to strengthen my aver-

sion. I can call it by no other name. And to live in a house, and be forced daily to associate and come in contact with a person in whom you can place no reliance, and in whose honor or integrity you can have no faith, is anything but pleasant. And yet it was so in this instance : and for my mother's sake I would have conquered my aversion, if I could.

My mother's cup of bitterness was full, and it needed but one more drop to run it over—to cast Brenda Merton into the world adrift as penniless as when she came ; it required but one more drop to forever forfeit that love and esteem that had sheltered and upheld her ever since the day she had wonderingly followed her mother's confined body to its last resting place, and came to the kind, pleasant home of her mother's benefactress.

The crowning act of villainy was yet to be developed, and in a most singular way.

As I have said, Brenda Merton resolved to win the heart of my sister's lover, and formed deep laid plots for its execution,

which came pretty near being successful. With her poisonous tongue she whispered tales in his ears of Bertha being betrothed to another, and told him that the time for marriage had already been appointed, and that my dear, innocent, guileless-minded sister was guilty of duplicity in being engaged to another while encouraging his attentions.

Gerald Whitworth had come to the town near which we lived, had taken rooms at the hotel, and was a frequent visitor at our house. My parents had known him a long time ago, and also knew that no family had a fairer record than that of Gerald Whitworth, and therefore they had welcomed him in our family with much cordiality. I know they felt pleased with their daughter's prospects, for the young man was in every way worthy.

He made himself perfectly at home in our house, and came just whenever he felt like it—either morning or evening—and was a member of our party at all the picnics, parties, and dances held in the neighborhood.

I could see the envious eyes of Brenda Merton often fixed upon him with a look I could not understand then, but did afterwards. She naturally fell into the habit of asking him to accompany her in her songs at the piano, for she had a brilliant touch and a superb voice, and her brown tapering fingers swept the pearl keys as easily and gracefully as a bird skims the air. She had cultivated her voice, and sang her songs with feeling and pathos. After a time Brenda monopolized him entirely, and left my sister to console herself as best she could. Whenever we formed a party consisting of young ladies and gentlemen from the neighborhood, which often met at our house, with packed lunch baskets and high humor, preparatory to starting for some point for a day's ramble in the woods, Brenda Merton always came forth a brilliant gipsy in her showy attire, and managed, or, I should say, maneuvered for a place by Gerald Whitworth's side, amusing him by her quaint, odd sayings and sarcastic flings at people and society. You may say what you please

about the "refreshing innocence" of young, guileless girls, but when a brilliant woman of the world, gifted with wit, style and beauty, sets her snares to entrap and please they are very apt to accomplish what they undertake, at least for the time being. So it was in this instance when the crash came.

Gerald Whitworth seemed for a time changed by the smiles of his ensnarer, but I do not think his heart ever really wandered away from its allegiance. Brenda would look up into his face with what he thought a pretty, piquant look, but to me, who adored my sister, seemed disgusting; and Bertha seemed in a fair way of loosing her lover, which cut her keenly. She drooped, and went listlessly about the house for several days, taking no interest in anything, having lost all taste for her old pursuits, while I knew what was the matter and hated Brenda Merton accordingly. Often when the sound of Gerald Whitworth's voice mingled with Brenda's in the summer night, the passionate refrain of which was, "O

dear Love, my heart is breaking," I have seen my sister's cheek flush, and then grow suddenly pale. Yet I do not think that Gerald Whitworth ever told her, Brenda Merton, that he loved her. He was only fascinated by the arts which she had used to ensnare him; perhaps both pleased and amused at the time. Who knows where they might have drifted had not an unfortunate *eclaircissement* taken place. But all in good time.

At any rate my sister Bertha was very unhappy and quite unlike her former self, although she continued to treat Brenda with unabated kindness.

One day a merry party of young ladies and gentlemen had assembled at our house, which had been selected as a rendezvous for them all to meet, preparatory to starting to Stony Point, a wooded eminence a mile or two from our house. All had expressed a wish to see the fine sunsets and the cloud-mists which made the spot a favorite with everybody. Our luncheon baskets were packed full of cold chicken, boiled ham, jellies, light

rolls, pickles and preserves, and cakes of every shape and description. A merry party we were, and anticipated a gay time. We were just on the eve of starting when lo and behold! the sky was suddenly covered with black clouds, and in a few minutes more the rain came pouring down; and that was an end to our proposed excursion, which did not cause much dismay among the merry party that decided to spend the day at our house, instead of picnicing and dining, *al fresco*, at Stony Point as was proposed. So we consoled ourselves, and made merry indoors, and danced on the parlor carpet to music rendered from one of Chickering's best, and took our dinners in my mother's dining-room, where she had made an addition to our dessert in the way of delicious ice-cream. We had a delightful day after all, only my sister suffered intensely from heart-ache, which she tried hard to conceal, returning a pleasant word and smile to all who spoke to her.

Brenda, who fancied she had won the golden prize, continued to monopolize the

greater part of Gerald Whitworth's attentions; yet I do not see how he could have helped it without positive rudeness. He made some faint efforts at politeness, but Bertha was slow to accept the homage so ungraciously offered. She was content to let things take their own course, and await the result.

The young people had danced, told stories, played cards, and made themselves generally merry, and had thrown off all reserve. What else could they do, shut up in a country house on a wet, rainy day?

It had rained steadily since morning, and towards evening the sky grew black, and our guests were prisoners for the night, to which no one objected.

After tea we had all assembled in the parlor, including my father and mother, who enjoyed our amusements as much as ourselves. Some one of the merry party, bent on having fun and a good time, proposed a regular, old-fashioned game of "blindfold," and soon we were romping and dodging and bumping our heads against the walls for all the world like a

parcel of children wild with delight. The servants thought it "mighty funny," so they said, and their black faces grinned at us from the back piazza.

At last it was Gerald Whitworth's time to be blindfolded, to which he submitted with a good deal of laughter and gay bantering, and then the sport commenced again in good earnest. He was groping his way in the corner, for I think he inhaled the perfume of Brenda Merton's handkerchief—her favorite heliotrope—and heard the swish of her sweeping train of crimson silk skirts as she glided in the corner and noiselessly stood, scarce daring to breathe, and he stumbled over an ottoman and fell almost at her feet. He was so close he might have heard her heart as it beat in its passionate throbs of love beneath her silken bodice with its black lace bertha, which became her marvelously well, where on it glowed a single crimson rose, while an exquisite cluster of creamy buds bloomed on the waves of her heavy black hair.

In stumbling, Gerald Whitworth let

fall out of his pocket a small silver box, which, as it struck the surface of the floor, flew open and out of it rolled an old-fashioned necklace of emeralds, costly as to price, and odd-looking in its uniquely fashioned clasp. There was but one other in the world like it, and that had been my mother's.

Gerald Whitworth removed the bandage from his eyes as he arose from the floor, with a most comical look, while my father at the same time stooped and restored the necklace and silver box, remarking as he did so:

“Mr. Whitworth, will you tell me where you obtained this ornament? I have never seen but one like it, and that one was a wedding gift from myself to my wife.”

Mr. Whitworth replied:

“With the greatest of pleasure, sir. ‘Thereby hangs a tale.’ Perhaps you may be able to throw additional light on a mystery which has puzzled me;” and he threw an amused, questioning look around the room.

“Permit me to examine this one moment,” said my father.

“With pleasure,” again returned the gentleman, at the same time handing back the necklace.

“One moment will suffice,” said my father, at the same time touching a secret spring, and disclosing to view the initials, “E. M.,” murmuring to himself—I caught the words—“I thought I could not be mistaken. It is the same.”

By this time the whole gay company had crowded around to hear the story of the emerald necklace. Brenda Merton leaned back against the wall with glittering eyes and cheeks flushed crimson beneath her olive skin. I think she saw that fate had overtaken her at last, and she was beginning to be caught in her own toils; while to myself I kept ever repeating the following lines:

“Thy race is run, thy fate is sealed:
Trust not the ties which bound thee,
For a thousand snares, still unrevealed,
Are woven close around thee.”

If the girl had only known what was

coming, I think she would willingly have plunged a poisoned stiletto to her heart.

My mother came and leaned on my father's chair, with a shade of interest, but I do not think anyone in that room had any idea of what was coming but myself. I was watching Brenda Merton keenly, and seeing how excited she was, and how the slender brown hands trembled as she strove to control herself, I knew she, in some manner, was connected with the missing necklace.

And then Mr. Whitworth began, as he saw how eager and curious the company had become.

“This necklace has been in my possession for some months, and I carry it around with me everywhere, thinking I may some day be so fortunate as to find the rightful owner, as I obtained it in rather a curious way. I was convinced the moment I rested my eyes on it that it was an heirloom in some family, from its antique clasp. Last summer my mother hired a new servant in her dining-room who was extremely fanciful in her dress,

and appeared to spend all her earnings in that way. She vied with the fashionable ladies, who visited at our house, in the matter of personal adornments, ruffles, bows of ribbon and ear-rings.

“Well, one day we had company to dine, and my mother’s new servant, thinking, no doubt, she would make herself smarter than usual in honor of the state occasion, came into the dining-room to attend at table, with this identical necklace on. I am something of a *connoisseur* in such things, and discovered at a glance that the necklace was both costly and valuable, and must have once rightly belonged to some one in the higher ranks of life. So I spoke to my mother about it, and she had observed it, too, as she was *au fait* to everything connected with the personal adornments of fashionable society, and could determine whether a piece of lace was real or imitation all the way across the room. We agreed to call the girl into private conference, after our visitors had left the house, and question her about it. We did so, and

asked her where and how she had obtained the necklace, evidently so valuable, and from her we obtained the following, which, for your benefit, I will repeat word for word as nearly as I can remember :

“ ‘I know you wonder how I got this costly thing, and, may be, you think I stole it. But you are mistaken ; I never stole it. I got it from a young lady down in the country where my mother lives.’ ”

Here I glanced at Brenda Merton, who was gradually growing paler and paler, and the hand that tried to toy indifferently with the gilded leaves of a superb annual on a table near by, trembled perceptibly, while her breath came hard and short. My mother was gazing straight at Mr. Whitworth with a fixed look of determination I had never before seen. My father and all the rest of them were listening with intense interest. Mr. Whitworth continued to repeat what the servant, in substance, had said to him.

“ ‘The young lady came to my mother’s cabin one hot day, said she had walked two miles, and came and offered to sell me

the necklace for five dollars. She said she wanted to go to a masque party, and her friends, where she was staying, said she must not go; but she was bent on going anyhow, but she did not have the money to buy a heap of little fixin's that she wanted, and she hated to ask for it at that time. I gave her my five dollars—all the money I had in the world; I remember it took a long time to count it out, for it was all in little pieces. I had done many an odd job in the neighborhood, and saved all my "chicken money," but it all went for the necklace. And this is the truth, sir, every word of it.' "

"I asked her," continued Mr. Whitworth, "if she would take a ten dollar bill for it, and the girl seemed highly delighted with the idea; so I paid her the money and took possession of the necklace; and I am very happy, indeed, to have been able to restore it to its rightful owner, for I had all the time a suspicion that the girl who had parted with as valuable necklace as that, had not come honestly by it."

And with a profound obeisance to the company, he concluded his story by saying :

“I esteem myself highly fortunate in having helped to amuse you all this rainy evening by this ‘o’er true tale,’ and now, as you have again come in possession of your property, I am consumed with curiosity to know if you have any idea who the delinquent young lady is who was so much enraptured with the idea of attending a *bal masque*, that she could wantonly part with a valuable necklace for the paltry sum of five dollars?”

I was watching Brenda Merton keenly as he spoke. There was a look of being hunted down to death by fate in her black eyes which blazed like coals of living fire in the dusky shadows where she stood. I saw that she was waiting breathlessly for my father’s answer ; saw, too, that my mother looked mercifully in another direction : also, that my dear, unsuspecting sister had not thought of Brenda Merton in connection with the story. I alone of all that company had had a correct suspicion from the beginning of who the real delinquent

was. And the prophetic words of old Mrs. Wilmot rang in my ears, now too sadly verified: "Her father was a thief before her; can you expect anything better?"

The company was waiting in breathless silence for my father's answer. A hush seemed to have fallen over them all, and still they waited. The answer came at last in slow, measured accents:

"You ask me who stole the necklace, and sold it so clandestinely, and I shall tell you. Brenda Merton is the culprit."

There was a low moan from the corner where she stood, and she fell helplessly forward, prostrate on the floor, with her face hidden from sight. The great crimson rose that had glowed on the black lace of her bertha was crushed to pieces, and its delicate petals scattered on the floor. She, too, was crushed—utterly humiliated—with the shock that had fallen so unsuspectedly upon her like the thunder that comes from a cloudless sky. Fifteen minutes before she was serene and smiling in conscious power of her gorgeous beauty, triumphing in haughty insolence over her

deposed rival, and feeling secure in the unspoken love and admiration of Gerald Whitworth; for however much this brilliant beauty may have charmed him for the time, it appears that no word of love had passed between them, save the frivolous "small talk" so profusely indulged in by young ladies and gentlemen in society, who feel privileged to indulge in "tender friendships," or "summer flirtations," which after they have been carried to a certain point cease, sometimes—not always, however—leaving one or the other of them cold and callous; and then, burying the old love born of an idle fancy, but nevertheless sweet, they cast themselves about, and in marrying have an eye only for worldly advantages, and sacrifice themselves for money.

As for myself, I felt no pity for Brenda Merton, although I knew she suffered keenly. The taint in her blood had showed itself on divers occasions. Why should I have been sorry for her? unless, perchance, a species of pity born of contempt that human nature had fallen so low.

The love and confidence between Bertha and her lover was restored, and they afterwards were happily married, loving each other perhaps all the better for the slight shadow that had temporarily fallen between them.

Three days after this humiliating scene in the parlor, and the unforeseen recovery of the stolen necklace, Brenda Merton, with all her effects packed in her large trunk, which had for several years been her property, was set down at the front door of a small dress-making establishment in the neighboring town, a sadder if not a wiser woman, forced by her own reprehensible conduct to earn her own daily bread by the strength that lay in her right arm. She carried with her her own personal effects, the books and clothing given her so ungrudgingly by her benefactress, and a few dollars in money which my father had, with characteristic kindness, given her, not caring to see her launched entirely penniless among those who could possibly have no sympathy for her. My father and mother counseled her to im-

prove in the future, yet they could not forgive her sufficiently to allow her to remain at home among their own daughters, as she had forever forfeited their esteem by that one crowning act of a life of dishonor
—THEFT.

THE END.

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